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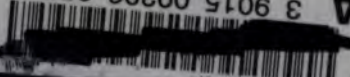
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**DRAMAS,**  
**DISCOURSES, AND OTHER PIECES.**

**VOL. I.**



# DRAMAS,

DISCOURSES, AND OTHER PIECES,

97877

BY

JAMES A. <sup>Hillhouse</sup> HILLHOUSE.

VOLUME I.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE Tragic model ranks as one of the two highest forms of composition, and, without exception, the most difficult. Speaking — sometimes briefly, darkly — from the depths of the agitated soul, it is less level to common apprehension than narrative poetry, or prose fiction, and it finds less favor; — but it finds it with ardent and elevated minds.

Whatever may have been the aspirations of our inexperienced years, on exchanging a studious retirement for the bustle of the world, we too often find ourselves beset with circumstances so adverse to abstract, or high imaginative, efforts, that our early literary conceits disappear like morning exhalations. Yet a

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thorough exposure to the changeful elements of life, instead of impairing Tragic genius, might invigorate it, one would think, for the ultimate production of more perfect fruit. Every remarkable personal experience, every moral change, every vehement agitation of the passions leaves traces behind it, to which the Tragic writer turns, like the limner to his own image, to verify some human trait. Love, hate, hope, fear, joy, grief, jealousy, guilt, remorse, repentance, — every error, mutation, bereavement, and disaster, — are teachers in the great school of Human Nature. The instructive result might be supposed to form *some* compensation to a truly great artist, if such an example should arise, for having encountered severe and varied trials. But there is danger of losing in enthusiasm by what is gained in experience.

The doctrine, that a poet must interweave his creations with the history, or the fable, of his country, is noticed in the first Discourse, and shown, as regards this branch of the art,

to be at least contrary to the practice of nations. The task of the Tragic writer is to wind up and set in motion the machinery of the Passions. Whether his phantoms are clothed in the drapery of one or another age and country is of little *comparative* consequence, and will be best determined by his immediate aim, and by the habits of his mind.\* It is easy to slight, as an *imitation*, whatever originates here, (cutting us off from the great models of Art,) if it be not an express exponent of ourselves. This sort of remark falls not unfrequently from British writers, who, though curious to know what we are, as a peculiar people, have shown little cordiality or candor towards our literature. If they look into our books without a derisive purpose, it is only to form a conception of the Republic, whose gigantic shadow begins to reach them from the regions of the setting sun. Our

\* Does any countryman of Shakspeare think of quarrelling with Hamlet, because the scene is not laid in London or Brighton?

novel organization, our alarming increase, our monarchical and aristocratical atheism, our armaments, our commerce, — are to Transatlantic philosophers, particularly those of England, matters of lively interest and vigilant speculation. Not so our attempts at intellectual distinction : — all that affair is, to them, like a tale told in the dull ear of a drowsy man. A well-digested volume of statistics, or a clever sketch of manners, would be more acceptable, at *our* hands, than an *Œdipus*, or an *Othello*.

A tissue, wrought and unwrought, like Penelope's, — flowered over with the hues of life, — glittering and massive with costly materials and patient toil, — cannot be manufactured in modern times as a *gainful* article : — the daughter of Icarus cannot weave against the handmaids of Arkwright. Elaborate attempts in dramatic poetry must not be undertaken with the hope of pecuniary recompense. The toil is formidable ; the merchantable commodity small. Reasons might be assigned, too,

why this form of literature is unlikely ever to enjoy an indiscriminate popularity. As yet, we sympathize, generally and heartily, in no pursuit, that does not lead to pecuniary reward, or political eminence. Whoever turns his pen to *profitable account*, no matter how hasty his productions, is regarded with more real complacency, (as less a problem,) than the artist who consumes his soul and his morsel over ideal beauty, whether for the canvass or the marble, or who sweats life-drops while moulding from the furnace of the passions materials ductile only while glowing with intensest heat. He, therefore, who aspires to no higher reward than lucre, and who looks to no tribunal more exacting than the multitude, who is conscious of no heart-swellings whose indulgence is a secret joy, who feels no trembling desire to ascertain, like the astronomer, his distance from the Greater Luminaries, should be frugal of his attentions to the Tragic Muse.

If the artless structure of *Demetria*, now for the first time published, disappoint, — the au-

thor takes refuge under the plea, that it was an early work, the earliest written of the three. If, on the other hand, it be objected to him, that it is, in some respects, more deeply wrought than either of the others, and *they* argue no improvement, he rejoins, that it is the last finished. The *different* dramatic aim of the several pieces will not escape the reader.

.

A misapprehension with regard to one of the characters of Hadad, as that work was first published, is doubtless to be laid partly at the author's door.\* Fortunately, the examination it led to, convinced him, that a critical part of the poem (nay, many parts,) needed amendment. Disclosures like those towards

\* Some readers identified the supernatural agency with the chief of the Evil Spirits, instead of a subordinate, whose Scriptural and Rabbinical character is in keeping with the fiction. Such a deviation from Bible hints, amplified, as they have been, and made prominent, by Milton, would have been an unpardonable error; and would have augmented unnecessarily the hazards of a

the conclusion would not be likely to be made by one so subtle, and so alive to their consequences, without somewhat more of mystification than he was represented as using. By subduing into shadow what was likely to be revolting to the interlocutor, nature and probability have been consulted, and by throwing in here and there glimpses of light, the reader has been guarded from future mistake. . It is hoped the impression now left on the mind will better correspond with the original design.

The discourses in the second volume were written for the occasions specified in their respective title-pages. That on the loss of our revolutionary Benefactor may serve to

subject environed, at best, with no trivial difficulties. No clue whatever to the individual Spirit was intended in the first edition. This was a departure from the first conception. It was not anticipated, that of all the *neri cherubini* the most improbable, from his commonly received character, would be singled out as the undoubted personage in the writer's mind.



show, that the unpalatable sentiments dwelt upon while urging, in another, the vital consequence of intellectual pursuits to virtue and happiness under a Republican Government, spring from no disloyal sentiments towards our institutions. Certain discrepancies may be pointed out, perhaps, in the different Discourses. Each exhibits the writer's impressions at the time, and they are left to reflect light on each other.

*Sachem's- Wood, April, 1839.*

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## CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

---

	Page
DEMETRIA . . . . .	1
HADAD . . . . .	87
PERCY'S MASQUE . . . . .	219



# DEMETRIA,

▲

TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

VOL. I.

1



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DEMETRIA was written before the author was sufficiently practised, to express his thoughts in verse with simplicity; though not before the heart has usually taken in a tolerable freight of the passions to which it relates. Its imperfections were soon apparent, and it was laid aside for revision; but, other themes and other affairs engaging his attention, it was left untouched till the summer of 1837. Having at that time reached a piece of level ground in the journey of life, and feeling an impulse to an old amusement, the task of re-writing this Tragedy, several times meditated and postponed, was taken in hand. A pleasure attended the labor, perhaps equal to that of inventing new scenes. For, when the writer, after an interval of twenty-six years, found himself employed, once more, over its remembered pages, an illusion restored, as it were, life's early fragrance, brought back the *lumen purpureum*, seldom adequately prized till its tint begins to fade. The structure and complexion of the original have been studiously preserved. The reader will not fail to perceive that it was not the *design* to produce a stately poem, but a domestic Tragedy as simple in diction as in plan.

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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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COUNT AMERIGO.

COSMO, *his nephew.*

ORSINI, *friend of Cosmo.*

BARBADECA.

Cavaliers, ladies, &c.

OLIVIA, }  
DEMETRIA, } *daughters of the Count.*

JACQUELINA, *Olivia's woman.*

BIANCA, *an old domestic.*

SCENE. *Belvédéré, the family seat, on the Arno, a few leagues from Florence.*





# DEMETRIA.

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## ACT I.

SCENE I. *An apartment communicating with the garden : glass doors thrown open in the moon-light : COSMO and DEMETRIA.*

*Cos.* Now, as thou sit'st, absorbed and motionless,  
Checkered with silvery gleams and quivering shadows,  
Thou look'st some pale, fair statue garlanded,  
Some Nymph, or Muse, such as the old Greek herdsmen  
Imagined haunting round their wood-girt temples !  
Or, if a nun-like fancy please thee better,  
One of the choir, (as holy legends have it,)  
Heard tuning their clear strings and glancing viols  
In the blue depths of such a night as this ! —  
Nor word ? nor smile ? — I 'll improvise no more. —  
Sure, never goddess lovelier, or more mute,  
Drew homage to her pedestal.

*Dem.* O, Cosmo,  
This is a sacred anniversary,  
An ever-hallowed season, when my heart  
Is busy with the past ; and thy return  
But freshens sad remembrance.

*Cos.* Think me not  
Incapable of sympathy. — Thou know'st  
How dear I loved her. — But to be, once more,  
At Belvederé turns me to a prattler.

*Dem.* Hither we came, that last sad night, to breathe  
The freshness. There she sat. — I see, still see  
The pale light on her cheek, and in her eyes  
The fatal brightness ! O, could I recount  
Her thoughts — anticipations — retrospects ! —  
The treasury of past years, our happy years,  
Was opened, — when no parting e'er was thought on ; —  
When thou wert here, and dwelt as one of us.  
Remind him (so she said) of my fond love,  
And bid him be a brother to my orphans.

*Cos.* (*snatching her hand.*) Then hear, Demetria —

*Dem.* Not on this vigil, —  
'T is hers, — 't is consecrated solemnly, —  
And images of grief are up before me.  
I joy that thou art here, at last ; yet O !  
What a drear interval ! — While she remained,  
Sweet sympathy was left ; but when she parted,  
My broken heart went with her to the tomb.  
For, Cosmo, I despaired — *ever* to meet thee,  
So lengthened and so dismal seemed the time. —

*Cos.* But now, my gentle one, the dark dream's o'er :  
We wake, we wake, to blissful certainty.  
Dwell, now, on brighter days, — on the fair future, —  
And deem the sainted parent we adore  
Looks down with blessings and approval.

*Dem.* Ah !

She promised — sometimes to be near me, — oft

To hover round me, — if such favor might be.

*(A lively measure strikes up beyond the garden wall.)*

Cos. Savoyards! — O! the jocund strain  
Chimes here; but o'er the wild Hungarian hills,  
When years divided me from Italy,  
Beshrew the rogues! they minted from me tears  
As fast as florins. — Merry vagabonds! —  
Come, — shall we list their lays? — or whither wilt  
thou? —

Come forth awhile; for like familiar faces  
The slopes and shadows of the garden look; —  
Heavenly, to me, after my weary exile!  
How oft, by night, by day, has this dear scene  
Stood in my fancy visible as now! —  
Let us revisit the old myrtle walk: —  
Rememberest thou our last hour there? — Come, come,  
We sin against the heavens to be in doors.

*(They pass into the garden.)*

## SCENE II.

OLIVIA'S *bed-chamber, in a wing of the villa overlooking the garden.* OLIVIA and JACQUELINA.

Oliv. I 'm sated, — weary of it.

Jacq. But why, my lady?

Oliv. No matter.

Jacq. Nay, Signora,

Were a poor serving-woman, worse endowed

Than our great grandam, — tied to these two pouches  
Empty, (*thrusting her hands into her pockets,*)

— an evil past the primitive, —

Were she to rail against the niggard world,  
There might be reason. But to hear youth, beauty,  
Fortune, and nobleness —

*Oliv.* O, fool me not ; —

Thou know'st, before I speak, the thorn that pricks me, —  
Thou seest her like an adder in my path, —  
Perceivest me slighted — like a dwarfish cluster, —  
While all are scrambling for the prize that gilds  
Her branch. No moment of my life is sweet  
Or comfortable. Deep, and ever rankling,  
I bear a gangrene that corrodes to death.

*Jacq.* You wrong your beauty, trifle with your  
peace. —

*Oliv.* Wrong? — Who that is not macerated, dead  
To all that agitates the soul of woman,  
Could choose but feel? — and bitterly resent? —  
Precedence is my right — inalienable —  
Yet when was not Olivia's favor blanked  
At her appearing? — Half the natural love  
My parents owed me she purloined. I pined  
The loss, to be rebuked for sullenness.  
Up from our childhood, — if my shape, or bloom,  
Dark curls, or glances, aught about me drew  
A breath of praise, — anon, I hear of eyes  
That witch, as doth the pale green evening sky ;  
Cheeks, like the rose-tipt glacier ; yellow locks,  
That make the dreamer murmur of Madonna !  
Ever, for her, the proudest breathed the sigh ;

Round her, Love anticked as a new-found Psyche,  
While scarce an eye seemed conscious of Olivia.

*Jacq.* Preposterous! had it been so, dearest lady.

*Oliv.* But this I've borne, if not with meekness, borne  
In bitter silence. I've adorned her train,  
Served as her foil, endured from youth neglects  
I can endure no longer. Mark me — But first,  
Hast thou observed this Cosmo?

*Jacq.* Yes, my lady.

*Oliv.* I mean, hast thou perused him heedfully?

*Jacq.* Enough to see a model for a sculptor.

*Oliv.* Hark, girl, — I'll tell thee. Some ten years  
ago,

Being bereft, at once, of both his parents,  
My father brought him here to Belvederé. —  
I, from the first, laid claim to him, and vowed,  
By all the powers of love, to make him mine.  
Just in his opening flower it was, he came, —  
Graceful and blooming as a Ganymede;  
Mixed fire and sweetness darting from his eyes,  
Even in grief, infection to the heart.  
O, that his lineaments could rise before thee  
In all the unsunned beauty of the stripling!

*Jacq.* Gramercy! I prefer the sun-burnt man.  
Clip his moustache, give him the Phrygian cap,  
And he might stand, now, for the rogue of Ida.

*Oliv.* But here, as ever, stepped the basilisk  
'Twixt me and happiness. Too soon I found  
My pittance was the poor regard that lives  
For kindred. But when his sidelong glance met hers,  
There flashed from it another tale. I raised

Some jealousies, — and accidents conspired, —  
That kept them from an open declaration  
Till he departed for the wars. Alone,  
She withered like a stemless blossom, long  
Deluding me with mournful expectations.  
But six full years are wasted, yet she lives,  
She blooms, as in a second May. And Cosmo —  
Marked'st thou? — ha? — at the table, — didst thou read  
The language of his eyes?

*Jacq.* Truly, Signora,  
I could not but perceive, or fail to note,  
While he recounted his young soldiership,  
Another pair, like blue bells after rain.

*Oliv.* Witch! sorceress! would that her tears might  
blind her!

Ah! Jacquolina! — 't is too palpable —

*Jacq.* (*perceiving from the window.*) Ha! apropos!  
(*Aside.*)

Be not too hasty: silently observe  
How things fall out a day or two: as yet,  
The storm of welcomes and God-bless-ye's scarce  
Is over. Joy and revel rule the house: —  
The very serving-men and grooms are crazed.  
Soon as this tipsy mood subsides — (*Seems to start.*)

*Oliv.* What 's there?

*Jacq.* Ha! — can it be! — faith! even — here, my  
lady,  
Stand here — Seest thou? — under that pomegranate?

*Oliv.* Confusion! Cosmo and Demetria!

*Jacq.* Troth,  
Almost embracing.

*Oliv.* Put away the light.

(*JACQUELINA extinguishes the lamp : OLIVIA  
leans from the window.*)

*Jacq.* (*in a whisper, after listening some time.*)

Hear'st thou ?

*Oliv.* Dost thou ?

*Jacq.* Nothing intelligible.

*Oliv.* Mark ! mark ! — What means that gesture ?

*Jacq.* Lo ! again —

To ratify some vow, or protestation, —

Look, how his amorous plume bows towards her cheek,  
And dallies, as to kiss her with the breeze.

*Oliv.* (*stepping back.*)

They move this way. — Watch where they go.

(*A door closes.*)

*Jacq.* Into the hall. That was the glass door closing.

*Oliv.* Her wittol father hears this ! By the mass !  
Arcadian times again ! — How know we — ha ?  
What gambols grots and garden nooks may witness ?  
O ! chaste, thrice pure, most pale-faced, snowy vestal !  
Could some, whom you feigned marble to, see this !  
Clinging, and palming it !

*Jacq.* Will you consent to be thus outmanœuvred ?  
For, now, we need no confirmation.

*Oliv.* No, —

Never, — by all my injuries, — I would not, —  
But where 's the remedy ?

*Jacq.* Ha ! ha !

Methinks 't would need no miracle, — no magic, —  
Nothing transcending mother wit.

*Oliv.* I 'll hail



Ingots upon thee, jewels as the wind  
Showers winter crystals! O! unlock thy brain,—  
Devise, forge, conjure for me! — But no *risks*,—  
No gossip,—jeopard not my pride or honor.

*Jacq.* When your grandfather, or your great uncle,  
(Which was it?) risked the main untraversed ocean,  
Struggled against despair and mutiny,  
Ate mouldy biscuit, drank sea-water, knew  
No more than ignorance, whether his loved home  
Should greet him more, or he englut some monster,  
Pray wherefore did he jeopard thus? — For nothing,  
But leave to stamp on the chart — Amerigo.  
And shall the lover's meed, so coveted,  
That, oft, the lack frenzies and drives men mad,  
Be plucked with less smart than a gooseberry? —  
What! for the tinkle of an idle tongue  
Forego the object of sighs infinite,  
Salt tears to drown ye, which has kept your eyes  
Unvisited of rest, poisoned your heart  
With jealous rancors, mildewed all life's sweetness,  
Made youth itself one canker, — saint-like sit,  
And see 't inveigled from you! — Virgin martyrs!  
In Venice you 'd be sung in hymns; held up  
In holy pulpits as the child of Job;  
Invoked, as one by patience sanctified! —  
O yes — I 've lived there: — did I ever tell thee —  
I mean a story — rife when I was there, —  
How a Venetian served her rival?

*Oliv.* Never.

*Jacq.* A noble lady, called Florentia, loved  
The counterpart of this same Cosmo. She,

Like you, had been his playmate, and imbibed  
Passionate thoughts, early and unawares,  
Till all her being centred in one hope. —  
It chanced, once, with her lover and her father,  
She visited their old ancestral castle,  
Built in the mountains, built for war and strength,  
A huge grey mass of towers and battlements,  
Lonely and frowning 'midst its solemn woods.  
Here they amused some sultry summer days  
With roaming through the strange, gigantic pile ;  
Reminded by its massiveness of times  
When the fierce Condottieri made the hills  
Flash with their arms, and echo with their music.  
A few sweet days flew o'er their solitude,  
When (as to mar their Paradise) her sister, —  
Adopted by some kinswoman, some countess,  
And reared by her from early youth, — this sister —  
I say her younger sister — followed her.

*Oliv.* What, to the castle ?

*Jacq.* Ay, as if resolved  
Maliciously to rob her of her birthright.  
Florentia welcomed her as might beseem  
Her father's child. But, soon, this young one, — mark, —  
This cunning piece of fascination threw  
Her witch-nets round her sister's plighted lover, —  
She stole his heart, — most treacherously robbed  
Her elder sister, — triumphed in the deed.  
When proud Florentia saw the truth, a pang  
Convulsed her like an epilepsy ; her eye  
Shot one Vesuvian glare, — and all was calm,  
Or seemed so. Thereupon, one listless day,

When both the cavaliers were down the mountains  
Riding or hunting, she began to speak  
Of sundry strange and secret passages,  
And labyrinths of cells, like catacombs,  
Cut in the living rock beneath the castle,  
For safety or concealment; vaults, and crypts,  
Receptacles of treasure or of groans.  
In one, she said, some hundred fathom down,  
The bandit Leo Galfri breathed his last,  
Chained to a ring still there. And in another  
Three chests, with mighty clasps of iron, stood,  
That looked like treasure-chests, but which her father  
Refused to open. Piquing thus, awhile,  
Her curiosity, she cried, at last,  
“Lauretta, come, I long to know their contents;  
Let’s go and privately examine them.”  
Purloining keys and lights, they went together,  
Down, down, long winding damp stone stairs,—through  
this

And that dark vault, low passage, massive door,  
Such as we hear of, — till they came indeed,  
Far down, into an arched room, prison-like,  
Ribbed with such monstrous stones as might have borne  
The whole incumbent pile. There stood the chests.

*Oliv.* Three, saidst thou?

*Jacq.* Three prodigious chests. —

Pausing to gather nerve and breath, they strove  
To open one; but could not, for a spring.  
This mastered, their united strength heaved up  
The bossy, clasped, and antique lid.

*Oliv.* What saw they?

*Jacq.* Parchment rolls, with papal seals,  
And piles of old discolored writings.

*Oliv.* Nought else ?

*Jacq.* O, yes ; among the papers lay a casket,  
Inlaid with brass or gold, or some bright substance.  
In haste to seize it (for the chest was deep),  
Lauretta climbed, and, reaching, lost her balance,  
And fell sheer in. — Down comes the heavy lid ;  
The steel spring snaps ; the rusty dungeon key  
Does its last office ; brave Florentia lies  
Slumbering upon her bed, and, waking, asks  
Whether Lauretta is returned from rambling.

*Oliv.* O, heavens and earth ! She did not perish there ?

*Jacq.* Her father, sister, all the house wore black,  
Whether she did or no ; — and every hold  
And fastness of the mountains was smoked out,  
And nineteen brigands and their leader suffered.  
I cannot say she perished *there*, when those  
Same rogues strangled her as was *proved*, and swung  
To expiate their crime.

*Oliv.* A dreadful story !

*Jacq.* I could unfold you many such.  
Her treachery deserved scarce better. False  
Insinuating minion !

*Oliv.* (*in a low, hesitating voice.*)  
Surely, — thou canst not mean —

*Jacq.* Mean what, Signora ?

*Oliv.* That I — that we —

*Jacq.* Speak out, dear injured lady. — What  
So moves thee ? — Speak ! — Nay, trust me not by  
halves.

*Oliv.* What meant'st thou by that tale?

*Jacq.* To show you, lady,  
How proud souls can resolve, when basely wronged.

*Oliv.* Then I must bear it?

*Jacq.* Better so,  
Than conscience should begnaw your life. And yet —  
Discard him, — tear his image from your breast  
And cast it to the winds. Arm your keen eye  
With coldness and disdain, and see these turtles  
Bill at the altar.

*Oliv.* Sooner come perdition!

*Jacq.* Then quickly meditate some bold resolve.  
Fortune and rank achieved, or fallen on him,  
Who can gainsay his suit? — His doating uncle? —  
It needs but half an eye to see they love. —  
Fate only, or some master-stroke, can stop  
Their marriage.

*Oliv.* Accursed truth! — But what — what stroke? —  
What fate?

*Jacq.* Some casualty, or providence,  
Agent, or anodyne, stronger than love.

*Oliv.* (*in a hollow voice.*)

O, Jacquelina — friend —

*Jacq.* Command me, dearest mistress.

*Oliv.* If — if —

*Jacq.* What says my lady? — No eavesdropper's  
near us.

*Oliv.* (*hurriedly.*)

No tower is here, — no prison, — safe, dark, deep, —  
No fatal instrument, — and ah! I fear,  
Scarce provocation to excuse like hers.

*Jacq.* Holy Maria keep Sathanas from us !  
What art thou ruminating ?

*Oliv.* Hush ! — speak lower ; —  
Methought you said — methought you whispered me  
With abjectness of mind — with tame endurance —  
But I 'm scarce waking. — Dismal, dreamlike things  
Flit through my fancy. I 'll to bed. Shut, shut.

(*JACQUELINA closes the sash.*)

Would we 'd a light : — the chamber 's like a tomb.  
Go — no ; stay — leave me not. You might disturb  
My father or some other. I 'll undress,  
For this time, as I may. — Make haste, I say. —  
Can I have caught an ague ?

(*JACQUELINA begins to undress OLIVIA, but  
stops, as in thought.*)

*Jacq.* What if — Signora — Could we not  
Accomplish it — somehow — by stratagem ?

(*OLIVIA turns quickly.*)

Let 's see. — But late — within this very month —  
Your sister contumeliously dismissed  
A wooer, whom we all know something of ;  
Haughty, unscrupulous, but of a face  
And mien to hit fastidious eyes. He 's now  
Moody with disappointment, apt for mischief —

*Oliv.* Well ; Barbadeca.

*Jacq.* And to a wish,  
Cosmo and he are still at daggers' points —

*Oliv.* What then ? 'T were death, if —

*Jacq.* I know it : hear me, lady. —  
Some quarrel in the service long ago,  
Some bagatelle, I know not what, unsheathed

Their angry weapons. Cosmo twice disarmed him ;  
Coupling the second gift of life with terms,  
That, chafing his imperious spirit, bred  
A rancorous hate. This, Cosmo wots full well.  
And Barbadeca, while he wooed your sister,  
(Before her saint-ship turned poor me adrift,)  
Confided gifts and letters to my care,  
Communed with me in private of his love,  
Lamenting that a rival he abhorred  
Should triumph o'er him. Somewhere he had caught  
A rumor of their early passion. Now, —  
The Count, you know, looked coldly on his suit  
As well as she, — now, of these circumstances  
Could we not weave the several ends together,  
Blending, transposing, and so coloring things,  
That Cosmo (prone to sudden jealousy)  
Should think his mistress, to gain time and slip  
Peaceably the knot of her old vows, dissembled ;  
Though secretly grown fond of Barbadeca ? —  
Might not these hints be wrought ?

*Oliv.* 'T would strain his weakness : —  
Credulity 's his vice.

*Jacq.* And all his rare  
And noble qualities he rates so cheap,  
That confidence would fail him, if a hair  
Fell in love's scale opposed to his deserts. —

*Oliv.* Yet — yet — I dread her art : she can put on  
Looks so angelical, so meek, so pure, —  
The thing were perilous.

*Jacq.* Not so to you ; —  
You need not move in it : — on me alone

Falls all the shame, which I will bear,  
And more, for your dear sake.

*Oliv.* How, if their love, this night  
Confessed and ratified —

*Jacq.* Even that may seem  
Forced on her for a while to skreen her secret ;  
Or charged on Barbadeca's malice.

*Oliv.* That, indeed.

*Jacq.* Besides, strong probability sides with us : —  
Time — opportunity — our fickle nature —  
The known caprices of our sex — Lord ! Lord !  
To dwell upon a shadow six long years !  
Six slow-revolving, dull-returning winters  
To nourish and keep warm a lifeless image ! —  
Love and Disdain might breed, and die, revive,  
And chase, and eat each other in less time.  
Sly Ariosto fables this too shrewdly  
With his two fountains.

*Oliv.* No more to-night. I 'll think of it. — What 's  
that ?

*Jacq.* Only the tree rustling against the window.  
But why mope here, Signora, when the moon  
Is queening 't over wood and river ? — Come ;  
Let 's to your closet. In the cheerful beam  
Of that bright window, I 've another thought  
Better unfolded ere to-morrow. — Come.

(*Exeunt.*)



## ACT II.

SCENE I. *A wood in the pleasure grounds. JACQUELINA near a hollow tree, overhanging the path: she walks restlessly to and fro.*

*Jacq.* Where can he loiter? — Time and place  
Were both so iterated! — Fools never comprehend  
What minutes are in fate's machinery —

*(Enter BARBADECA, looking cautiously round.)*

*Barb.* So! Jacquelina, Jacquelina!

*Jacq. (springing forward.)* Has Cosmo seen thee?

*Barb.* No.

*Jacq.* Where 's the envelope?

*Barb.* Here. *(Producing a paper.)*

*Jacq.* Her hand! — Now mark.

*(Taking a letter from her bosom.)*

This scrap I picked from out her private papers; —  
One of her scores of tender notes to Cosmo; —  
Hundreds she penned, seen only by herself.  
Its drift suits well, — love-breathing words,  
Without direction, date, or name. This, — mark ye, —  
Lodged in the cover of the cruel lines  
That sent you crest-fallen home, converts  
Into a honeyed billet to yourself;  
Past human eyes, her own even, to deny.

*Barb.* What then?

*Jacq.* Observe. — Cosmo will presently pass by;  
Nay, at this moment is not farther from us

Than the green knoll under the old beech yonder.  
Now, as you wish success in your heart's cause,  
Cross him. At first, seem rapt in meditation,—  
Stalk by him thus—as though you saw him not,—  
After, descry him suddenly,—start back,  
And disappear as though you shunn'd him.

*Barb.* But wherefore?

*Jacq.* Hereafter you shall know. Go—prithee—  
go!—

So far you 've trusted me.

*Barb.* Well, well,—which way?

*Jacq.* Keep toward the river, just within the trees,  
Till you perceive him;—then as I direct.

(*Exit BARBADECA.*)

So far we thrive!—It falls out to a wish!—  
Prove he but rash and jealous to my hope,  
The mesh is fatal. Other cares, pale beauty,  
We 'll furnish thee withal, than rating me  
Because I chide a beggar from the gate.  
How keen Olivia 's on the scent! No need  
Of art, and cunning practice, to wind up  
Sheer self-idolatry. True as the needle  
To one dear influence, all besides is nothing.  
If but her dastard nature——Soft! he comes.

(*Cosmo seen approaching. She hastily opens  
the letter, and, leaning against the tree, seems  
buried in thought: as he passes, she starts  
violently.*)

Good heavens! he 's here!

*Cos.* (*stopping.*) Why start ye?

*Jacq.* Start, my lord?

*Cos.* Ay, start; as if you feared to see me?

*Jacq.* Feared to see you, Signor?

*Cos.* (*approaching her.*)

What paper 's that you crush together so? —

Nay, draw not back. You tremble too.

*Jacq.* My lord,

I know of nought to tremble at.

*Cos.* What paper 's that?

*Jacq.* This paper?

*Cos.* Ay, that paper, girl?

Concerns it me?

*Jacq.* You, my lord?

*Cos.* Else, why that start?

And seeing me, cry “Heavens! he 's here!” Is 't more  
For me to ramble this way than another?

*Jacq.* I knew not that I did.

*Cos.* You thrust it in your bosom, too,—lo! lo! —  
So fearful eager—Come, I 'll see it.

*Jacq.* Nay—

Indeed—beseech ye, think not—Force me not—  
Think on 't no more—for your own peace.

*Cos.* (*startled.*) Ha!

*Jacq.* Alas! what have I said?

*Cos.* Give me the paper.

*Jacq.* Indeed, my lord—

*Cos.* No words—The paper.

*Jacq.* My lord, indeed—Be ruled—upon my life—

*Cos.* (*seizing, and unfolding the letter.*) To Bar-  
badeca! —

Demetria's hand! — (*Reads.*)

*Jacq.* O, shake not thus,—

It cannot be — upon my soul it cannot —

*Cos.* Death! — where got you this?

*Jacq.* Indeed, my lord —

Sustain it like a man. — It can be only

Some casual strong similitude. Observe;

Here is no name.

*Cos.* Whose characters are these? —

Whose pen — whose mind could so express? —

No, no, by Heaven, — this is no counterfeit. —

But hark ye, mistress, how camest thou by this?

*Jacq.* Here, Signor, in the hollow of this tree  
My eye in passing fell upon it.

*Cos.* When?

*Jacq.* Now.

*Cos.* Haunts she about here? — hast thou lately seen  
her?

*Jacq.* Now, as I stood debating with myself,  
Skreened by these drooping branches, I descried her  
Hitherward moving with a stealthy step.  
Perceiving me, she started, blushed, and vanished.

*Cos.* (*walks to and fro: striking his breast.*)

O, burst! — And yet what eye-beams fell upon me  
When first I clasped her — only yesterday! —  
The flush, the smile, the tear of welcoming,  
The wild confusion — had not that a tongue? —  
Yet here 's the living witness.

*Jacq.* Say not so —

Rend — rend it. — Wherefore should she trust  
Such vouchers here? in this sequestered walk?  
The winds might waft them to the moon, as soon  
As any likely chance to Florence.

*Cos.* He 's here — I 've seen him.

*Jacq.* Heavenly grace forbid !

*Cos.* But now, I came upon him unawares :—  
He started, scowled upon me like a Demon,  
And hastily withdrew.

*Jacq.* I 'm sorry, Signor, —  
My heart weeps blood for you.

*Cos.* To waste her sweetness — Yet how *can* it be ? —  
What doth the viper here, though ? — Cursed, cursed  
folly !

When but a pass had rid the world of him.

*Jacq.* How long — pardon, my gracious lord, but may  
I ask, how long since you left Belvederé ?

*Cos.* Six fatal years.

*Jacq.* (*starting.*) Six years ? — I knew not that.

*Cos.* I see your thoughts. Alas ! alas ! would God  
I ne'er had left her ! round her guileless steps  
I should have watched. But honorable deeds  
Seemed needful even to my hopes in her.  
And ah ! I thought no time, no chance, would change her.

*Jacq.* Few hearts are of a temper proof to time.

*Cos.* Tyrant ! —

Better thou 'dst laid her in an unsoiled grave,  
And strewed sweet maiden emblems over it !

*Jacq.* Hast thou e'er wrong'd him ?

*Cos.* Never ; but have galled,  
Galled to the quick, his unforgiving pride.  
And now he stabs me to the life of life.  
Baffled of open vengeance, like a burglar  
He has broke into my heart's treasure-house.  
And yet — only last night, her smile was peace ! —

She put me from my suit though, — twice she did it, —  
On some slight pretext: — *that* she did evade ; —  
But it was done, methought, in such sweet accents  
As seemed most gracious to me.

*Jacq.* Woman 's a riddle, or a kind of Sphinx,  
Of nature most occult, — sure to be variable, —  
Set, though unstable, — blind to old desert,  
Agape for new, — afraid of her own shadow,  
Yet dashing with spread sails for some gay headland,  
Through straits and whirlpools that make seamen pale.  
Capricious, insect-like, she oft alights,  
But never settles. Passion is the flower  
On which she poises her empurpled wings  
To sip and revel ; but who thinks to seize her,  
Finds her light pennons watchful. Honest men  
Study her contradictions like a text ;  
Believe her freezing when she shows most ice,  
And think her melting when her eyelids mould  
Bullets to store the arsenal of mischief.  
My lord, I 've seen your converse but a day,  
And could have sworn by every outward sign  
She loved ye dear as life. I half believed  
Her follies were forgotten.

*Cos.* What means that ?

*Jacq.* Her love — her fondness — nay, her foolish  
fancy —

My lord, I know not how to speak it out ;  
Your wildness frights me.

*Cos.* (*seizing her.*) Speak ! I charge thee ! — Speak !  
Spare not a tittle, as thou 'dst shun my wrath !

*Jacq.* I prithee loose me, Signor ; you shall know.

*Cos.* But all — let me have all.

*Jacq.* You shall, my lord.

*Cos.* Go on, — fear not, — so you keep nothing back.

*Jacq.* A year ago, about the Easter tide,  
The Count and his two daughters spent a month  
In Florence. There, the Marquis Barbadeca saw  
And loved the younger. What the reasons were,  
I know not ; but the Count declined his suit,  
Abruptly, absolutely ; and cut short  
His stay in Florence to be rid of him.  
But he, enamoured, came to Belvederé,  
And here besieged us, till, as I supposed,  
Despairing of the heart he sighed for ——

*Cos.* Why ? Did she use him coldly ?

*Jacq.* She was coy,  
Her father peremptory. So he left us.  
Some three weeks passed along. One afternoon,  
All taking their siesta, I, by chance  
Needing some rosemary for a present purpose,  
Went through the shrubbery past that old arched gate  
Sunk in the trellised wall. That gate is kept,  
Now-a-days, locked. Perceiving, as I passed,  
The key just peeping from within, I stopped ;  
And, finding it made fast inside, climbed up  
A little ladder left against the vine  
That, mantling o'er the wall, quite sheltered me,  
To see who, at that hour, was there : for this  
Is the Count's private place of meditation ;  
And he, I knew, was sleeping in his chamber.

*Cos.* Well ?

*Jacq.* Well, as I live, my lord, to my amazement,

I saw her with the Marquis, arm in arm,  
In a close shaded alley.

*Cos.* Demetria ?

*Jacq.* As true, my lord, as yonder shines the sun,  
Arm locked in arm, with this same Barbadecca.

*Cos.* O, wretched ! — lost ! — degraded ! —

*Jacq.* They seemed in earnest conference. As they  
passed me,

I could distinguish words, and tones, and looks,  
(Endearing all,) but, when they walked away,  
Their voices sank to murmurs. Once, I caught  
This much from him : “ ’T is painful to deceive  
A father, but we ’ve no alternative.”

*Cos.* Villain !

*Jacq.* I did not hear, and cannot now recount,  
Connectedly their talk. Like plighted lovers,  
In low and earnest tones they spake ; their theme  
Made more intelligible by their looks  
At last, I heard your name, my lord.

*Cos.* What followed ?

*Jacq.* I almost fear —

*Cos.* Away ! be honest, — speak.

*Jacq.* My lord, I could not catch the sequent words ;  
But they grew mirthful. He in merry mood  
Vented some wit, which she responded to.  
He challenged her with having loved some one,  
Whose name I only could make out by guess.  
She vowed ’t was false ; protesting volubly.  
But at their next turn I distinguished this : —  
“ When he dwelt here, I scarce out of my childhood,  
He wrote me posies, plucked me flowers, and so forth.



What then ? Three days beyond the parting hour  
His image never crossed my fancy more."

*Cos.* Did she say that?

*Jacq.* She did, indeed, my lord.

*Cos.* (*for a moment overpowered.*)

Heaven knows, — Heaven, only, e'er can know,  
How long, how fondly, I have clung to thee ! —  
And thou hast been to me an angel, — ever  
Infusing nectar in my bitter cup.

When hope withdrew, and left no gleam along  
The sad horizon, thou hadst power to light  
Life's melancholy vista ! Morning oped,  
And evening fell, sweeter because a day,  
A night, had flown to re-unite us ! Thanks —  
Thanks — many a mountain watch-fire in the Bannat,  
Thy image gladdened past Armida's gardens ! —  
I would have died for thee ! — All, all is cancelled ! —  
Now, though I knew her gulled by foulest practice,  
Though I could prove it, and, by proving it,  
Make her mine own again, I would not turn  
Thus — to reclaim her.

*Jacq.* Nobly spoken ! —

Before he pressed her lips at leave taking ——

*Cos.* (*starting.*) God !

*Jacq.* He earnestly besought her, if, as rumored,  
You should return, and urge old vows upon her, —  
(For vows he would persist had passed between ye,)  
He prayed her still to wear a gracious eye,  
Till he could clear the way, with prudent speed,  
Of obstacles he named. Then his proud walls  
Should bid them, kinsmen, lovers, all, defiance.

*Cos.* Ha ! now the web 's unravelled ! — 't is to this  
I owe her glances.

*Jacq.* Looks more speaking, Signor,  
I 'm sure I never saw, — yet modest too.  
They staggered me, though privy to their secret.  
This, Sir, is all ; — fearing surprise, I stayed  
No longer.

*Cos.* Can she stoop to cheat me ? —  
Poor maid ! — Detested cozenage must have done it !  
Not thought upon me ! — Heaven forgive the sin,  
If I have thought less of my God than thee !

*Jacq.* Farewell, my lord. — My lady may remark  
My lengthened absence. — Since it thus o'ercomes you,  
I cannot but repent, — though duty seemed  
To prompt, what accident surprised from me.  
Adieu ! adieu ! — Fate deals on noblest hearts .  
Her bitterest spite. (*Exit.*)

*Cos.* So — my bubble 's broken ! —  
And have I dreamed so long ? only imagined  
The rapture of this meeting ? Is it all  
Ideal ? unsubstantial ? — Am I such a wretch ? —  
(*Putting his hand to his heart.*)  
A horrid pressure ! — Never thought upon me !  
Although my breast has been her throne, her shrine —  
(*Voices heard in the wood approaching: Cosmo  
retires.*)

## SCENE II.

*Olivia's chamber. OLIVIA and JACQUELINA.*

*Jacq.* Speak not so faintly ; it will not recoil.

*Oliv.* Thou know'st not that. One interview, one word  
Of soft expostulation 's ruin.

*Jacq.* 'Sdeath !

Is this a time for halts, and snail-paced fears ? —  
Lady, we 're in for 't ; launched ; and must bestir  
Ourselves to scape the quicksands.

*Oliv.* Gently — O, more gently. —

But say again, — how spake he ? how looked he ?

*Jacq.* Nay, nay, I 've told you thrice.

*Oliv.* Raised he no scruple ?

*Jacq.* O, yes ; and puzzled for a while  
To reconcile her conduct with the letter ——

*Oliv.* The snare, — the rash, the fatal snare !

*Jacq.* But here,  
My gloss, like every able commentator's,  
Perplexed the plain and simple to our purpose.  
No, no ; belief has full possession of him. —  
His *temper* mainly serves us. Ne'er will he  
Confront and tax her with her perfidy,  
As many a man would do : he will conceal  
The bleeding hurt, till thy sweet surgery  
Have time to heal it. As for her, she 'd fade  
To alabaster ere complain to mortal.

*Oliv.* But what avails all this, unless ——

*Jacq. (singing.)*

*What boots thy labor, gentle squire ?*

*What thank have ye ?*

*If Don Padilla*

*Forswear Pedrilla,*

*Yet never vail his crest to me ?*

Coraggio ! — Hence, our tactics are by rule. —

'T is but to ply our catapults of eyes ; —

Bid Cupid, if his archery fail, unmask

Heavier artillery ; push his batteries

In sight o' the citadel ; display our flag,

That floats redundant round a neck like Juno's,

And his astonished heart capitulates !

*Oliv.* Have done with flourishes, and plainly say —

*Jacq.* First probe the wound that rankles in his pride.

He thinks Lord Cosmo jilted. Gall him first.

Then drop in balm upon the smarting spot,

By telling him some flattering, tender tale,

Aptly contrived ; and, when the mood is on,

Whisper how well it were, and how deserved,

To show this fickle fair one he contemns her

By wedding with a maid, who long has hung

With secret passion o'er his image.

*Oliv.* Rare !

*Jacq.* But I must use ye freely. I must swear

You sigh his name to rills, carve it on trees,

Twine it with love-knots, like Angelica

Her young Medoro's ; — evidence the same,

Impressed, perhaps, in some sequestered shade ;

Protest you waste the sleepless hours on him,

And in your dreams hold converse with his ghost.

*Oliv.* Be wary, O, be wary : — thou grow'st giddy.

*Jacq.* Now, to the hall. Remember your own part.  
Sadden your aspect ; let your languishing eye  
Dwell on him as the bird's upon the serpent's : —  
Soon as he marks, avert it ; — heave a sigh ; —  
A gentle sigh, — perceptible, — but just  
To show the swelling of your bosom.

*Oliv.* (*aside.*) Familiar insolence !

(*Excunt.*)

## ACT III.

SCENE I. *The garden. Cosmo alone.*

*Cos.* Why, why does nature form us so? —  
Nor gird the wretch predestined to endure,  
With hoops of steel, — case him in adamant, —  
Buckler him some way 'gainst the cruel shafts? —  
O, partial Fate! why must the generous heart  
So often bleed and agonize, — transpierced  
By faithless friendship, or more faithless love? —  
Accursed delusion! — Twining round the soul  
So gently, — binding golden link on link, —  
All the while lulling us with some sweet song,  
Till, giddy with enchantment, and fast bound,  
She starts, — transforms into a fiend, —  
Wrenches the heart-strings, and is gone for aye!  
Death! what mock am I? — Is this the spot  
Where, but last night, we roved? — Who then so blest —  
(*Enter JACQUELINA, from one of the walks.*)

*Jacq.* What, Signor, still in sadness?

*Cos.* Leave me.

*Jacq.* O, speak not thus. Call up  
Your noble resolution: minds heroic  
Wrestle with fate itself, and spurn at trifles.  
Nay, nay, my lord, ——

*Cos.* Is it no more? — to lose  
The star that ruled and cheered my mental heaven,  
And reft of which, I 'm left upon life's sea

Benighted and alone.

*Jacq.* I meant not so.

It is a trial ; and demands of you ——

*Cos.* I had collected all my hopes around her ;  
There, there they clung, and, with her, lived or died.  
Sweet, scattered blossoms ! whirled away for ever !

*Jacq.* Such ever was, and will be, fickle woman.

*Cos.* Methinks I 'm laboring in a fearful trance, —  
Appalling images and horrid dangers  
Glare in upon me, yet they still seem phantoms.

*Jacq.* As when we weep in dreams, yet hope our grief  
Will prove a dream. So yours, my lord, will prove.

*Cos.* The dark cloud was behind me, and the bow  
Bestrid it ; all before, was lucid ; flowers  
Diffused their odors ; birds and waters sang  
Along my path, that gently seemed to wind  
Through shade and sunshine, round enamelled slopes,  
Down fairy vales, through opening mountains blue.  
Now, like some shipwrecked desolate, I stand ——

*Jacq.* Why waste your sorrow on a worthless ob-  
ject ? ——

It would but furnish cruel merriment. —  
Cast her away, and place your love, my lord,  
On one who knows to prize it.

*Cos.* Can she jest  
At Cosmo's anguish, who has wept, so oft,  
When only fancied ills assailed her ? Oft,  
Imagination harrowing up my soul  
With some sad vision of her death or sufferings,  
I 've, waking, found my face all bathed in tears.

*Jacq.* Credit me, once for all, my gracious lord, ——

*Cos.* Truth, sanctitude, and maiden constancy !  
Where are ye exiled ? Once, ye waved round her  
Your crystal arms, and made her footsteps holy.

*Jacq.* I could reveal — I know a heart, as true,  
As fair, — where every virtue, every grace  
Abides, that honors woman.

*Cos.* False, I swear.

*Jacq.* And more, my lord. When night and silence  
woo

Even sorrow to repose, this angel breathes  
The secret sigh for Cosmo.

*Cos.* Peace, and begone !

*Jacq.* By blessed Mary's life, 't is true.

*Cos.* Thou liest ;

Thou 'rt perjured ; — trouble me no longer.

*Jacq.* If there 's a saint in Paradise, or soul  
In Purgatory, bliss for faith, or fire  
For lack of 't, 't is a sacred truth. Upon  
My life, and soul's salvation, it is true.

*Cos.* Who ?

Who mourns, with hapless Cosmo ? for the bond  
Of sympathy shall join us !

*Jacq.* O, my lord,  
How the pure red would paint her cheek with shame  
And anger, did she dream her secret breathed  
Even to the wind.

*Cos.* Being herself  
Unable to conceal it, thou 'rt not bound.

*Jacq.* No contumely. Remember how disdain  
From one beloved has racked thy soul, and learn  
Compassion.



*Cos.* O, I know not what I say.

*Jacq.* Perhaps I err, my lord ; but thus to see  
What should be life's bright morning overcast,  
See her in hopeless misery pine, — I cannot ; —  
Despite the consequences, should she ever,  
Ever suspect, I 'll venture to disclose.

*(Looking about her and speaking low.)*

My lord, — Olivia loves you, — long has loved, —  
And with the deepest, tenderest passion.

*Cos.* Ha ! ha !

*Jacq.* *(disconcerted.)* Signor, — I thought —  
Can he lay claim to sympathy, who scorns  
The wretched ?

*Cos.* She wasting with a secret passion ! —  
And thou believ'st it ? — Why, what barefoot lass,  
That follows goats over the breezy mountains,  
Hath fresher roses or an eye more buxom ? —  
No, no, my girl ; you must invent once more.

*Jacq.* My lord, appearances deceive. I 've seen  
A young and beauteous lady on her death-bed,  
Nay, in her coffin, dressed for her last sleep,  
With such a bloom yet lingering on her cheek  
As flushes yonder peaks when day 's departed.

*Cos.* And how learn'dst thou this precious secret ?

*Jacq.* The soul, my lord, is fashioned — like the lyre.  
Strike one chord suddenly, and others vibrate.  
Your name abruptly mentioned, casual words  
Of comment on your deeds, praise from your uncle,  
News from the armies, talk of your return,  
A word let fall touching your youthful passion,  
Suffused her cheek, called to her drooping eye

A momentary lustre, made her pulse  
Leap headlong, and her bosom palpitate.  
I could not long be blind, for love defies  
Concealment, making every glance, and motion,  
Silence, and speech a tell-tale ——

*Cos.* Is this all ?

*Jacq.* These things, though trivial of themselves, begat  
Suspicion. But long months elapsed,  
Ere I knew all. She had, you know, a fever.  
One night, when all were weary and at rest,  
I sitting by her couch, tired and o'erwatched,  
Thinking she slept, suffered my lids to close.  
Waked by a voice, I found her —— never, Signor,  
While life endures, will that scene fade from me, —  
A dying lamp winked in the hearth, that cast,  
And snatched the shadows. Something stood before me  
In white. My flesh began to creep. I thought  
I saw a spirit. It was my lady risen,  
And standing in her night-robe with clasped hands,  
Like one in prayer. Her pallid face displayed  
Something, methought, surpassing mortal beauty.  
She presently turned round, and fixed her large, wild  
eyes,

Brimming with tears, upon me, fetched a sigh,  
As from a riven heart, and cried : “ He ’s dead !  
But hush ! — weep not, — I ’ve bargained for his soul, —  
That ’s safe in bliss ! ” — Demanding who was dead,  
Scarce yet aware she raved, she answered quick,  
Her Cosmo, her beloved ; for that his ghost,  
All pale and gory, thrice had passed her bed.  
With that, her passion breaking loose, my lord,

She poured her lamentation forth in strains  
Pathetical beyond the reach of reason.

"Gone, gone, gone to the grave, and never knew  
I loved him!" — I 'd no power to speak, or move. —  
I sat stone still, — a horror fell upon me.  
At last, her little strength ebb'd out, she sank,  
And lay, as in death's arms, till morning.

*Cos.* Hath she at no time spoke of this?

*Jacq.* Long after, Signor, she did task me closely,  
If in a certain night she had not raved.  
By searching questions she drew forth the truth.

*Cos.* What said she then?

*Jacq.* She charged me never to divulge her shame,  
Not as I loved her life, and said the secret  
Should go down with her to the tomb. But I  
Vowed inly, on that solemn night, if e'er  
I saw, to break it to Lord Cosmo.

*Cos.* Too harshly judged! —  
Poor partner in misfortune! — Sayst thou so? —  
While I saw life's bright seasons rolling by,  
Enslaved unto the falsest, fairest phantom  
That ever took Heaven's semblance to deceive! —  
O! I could clasp, and weep upon her neck!

*Jacq.* What! sigh and weep?  
Yield her that triumph? — Hiss rather! — One bold  
effort —

Cast her disgraceful shackles off, and wed  
A matchless lady whose whole heart is yours.

*Cos.* (*starting.*) Marry!

*Jacq.* Why not?

*Cos.* Marry Olivia?

*Jacq.* Ay; marry:—show this giddy nymph her error,

Who thinks to hold you still in thralldom. Devils!  
Before I'd be her jest with Barbadeca ——

*Cos.* O, 't is bitter.

*Jacq.* 'T is plain the slippery pair exult  
In your imagined anguish. Such an act  
Would cloud their honey-moon.

*Cos.* And that were well,—  
That, that were well.

*Jacq.* Besides, you gain, my lord,  
A gentle, constant friend, whose soft endearments,  
In time will woo you back ——

*Cos.* Leave me alone. ——  
The thought has struck me.—It would disturb their mirth.

Leave me.—(*Exit JACQUELINA.*) Marry!—That would sting her home!

Though a loathed reptile has with poison mixed  
The springs of her affection,—though she scorns me,—  
'T would grieve her pride, were I to wed another.

Beholding me kneeling beside her sister,  
She may come to herself, and shake this dream  
Of folly off. Her early love may gush,  
Like pent-up waters, back into her heart!—

But then—then we are parted ——

O, misery!—which way shall I turn?—Are these  
The nuptials I have panted for? These, these,  
The transports?—Heaven have mercy!—O, Demetria!  
How couldst thou bury in oblivion all  
Those hallowed hours, so fraught with feeling!—  
stoop ——

But if she be not fallen past belief,  
If one last spark of tenderness remain,  
I 'll rouse it, though the effort cost my life.  
I 'll watch her as I swear myself away ; —  
Then, if she falters, — if one gush of tears  
Betray her, — I am recompensed for torture. (*Exit.*)

## SCENE II.

*A retired part of the wood : BARBADECA and JACQUE-  
LINA.*

*Jacq.* It helps us either way : — best, if they wed ;  
For then Demetria's hope lies desolate,  
And she becomes more ductile to your will.  
If not, the tale deceives them ; when she 's seized,  
It seems elopement, and averts our peril.

*Barb.* How does she bear it ?

*Jacq.* Why, as martyrs, fire. —  
Speed, speed, or truth will out. Her swollen eye  
And ashy cheek cannot be long unnoticed.  
He, too, will melt : this angry gust o'erblown,  
The natural current of his soul will set,  
And sweep our schemes to nothing. Love of this sort  
Is not a hasty flame lighted by fancy,  
That blazes and expires. It grew with him  
From early days ; hope wore its hues ; its tints  
Are over all his retrospect ; it lives  
Essential with the spark of life, and death  
May fail to quench it.

*Barb.* When, and where,  
Can we best take her?

*Jacq.* Close upon the river,  
Just where it turns the point of Belvederé,  
Stands a pavilion, like a summer-house,  
Crowned with a little spiral pinnacle —

*Barb.* I know the place.

*Jacq.* That is the surest, safest. —  
It was their haunt, when, in their love's first bloom,  
They used to steal away together. When he  
Betook him to the wars, I 've heard them say  
She almost made it her abode; seemed ever  
Happiest when planting round it flowers; and there,  
When the untroubled moon was in the Arno,  
And all was dew and fragrance, oft retired,  
In tender reverie, or with her lute  
Recalling favorite airs of Cosmo. — Ah!  
To sever hearts so knit seems heinous. Signor,  
I 'm taking that upon me for your sake —

*Barb.* Does she frequent there still?

*Jacq.* O, constantly: —  
You may descry her from the farther bank.  
Station your horsemen there, and dart across,  
With one or two staunch followers, in a skiff.

*Barb.* What hour were surest?

*Jacq.* Woods have echoes, mind. —  
Loup-garou may be prowling: — you best know  
The peril 's in his fang.

*Barb.* No more of that.  
He feels me in his vitals now, and shall  
In his best blood, if Fate again confront us. —

But will his jealous frenzy drive the fool  
To wedlock?

*Jacq.* Not if he take time to cool.  
But while the transport lasts, if he address  
Olivia or his uncle, he 's committed.  
Then pride will force him on, consistent pride,  
The stumbling-stone of honorable asses.

*Barb.* Hell catch him, if he fall.

*Jacq.* And *keep* him! —  
Or, some day, you and I may rue these pranks.  
No matter: — let future ills physic themselves. —  
And so, my lord, — more to the present purpose, —  
I think I 've been herein your humble handmaid.

*Barb.* My plotter, executor, head, hand, all!  
Think not thy zeal misprized, my pretty witch,  
Got by the Devil, or else by Machiavelli.  
There 's for thee. (*Gives her a purse.*)

*Jacq.* Thanks, my lord Marquis, thanks. — 'T is now  
a year  
And some odd months, since I, at your entreaty,  
Left Florence, and a wealthy service. — Is it not?

*Barb.* Why, thereabouts.

*Jacq.* I fastened on this house, and here have toiled  
For your advancement. Have I not?

*Barb.* Thou look'st  
Like a green widow, screwing up thy mouth  
Less than a purse-ring.

*Jacq.* In my zeal to serve you,  
I 've wronged my conscience, taken grievous things  
To my account. I scarcely dare look back.

*Barb.* What! cant! — Thou? thou?

*Jacq.* You smile. But I 've a soul, —  
A precious soul, — and, well *thou* know'st, deep guilt  
To be assoiled.

*Barb.* Spare your preamble, holy lady Abbess,  
And to the point.

*Jacq.* Well then, my gracious lord,  
You may remember, on a certain day,  
You being downcast with your hopeless suit,  
I cheered you ; — counselled so and so ; revived  
Your spirits, — smoothed your difficulties, —  
Till hope and resolution chased despair.  
You took a solemn oath upon you then,  
An oath most binding, if through me you ever  
Attained the mastery of that froward beauty,  
You would endow me with a seat you owned,  
With some small lands about it, on the Ombrone.

*Barb.* Ha ! ha ! I thought the circuit would end land-  
wise.

So, being conscience-laden, you 'd forswear  
This wicked, wicked world, and in your snug  
House on the Ombrone negotiate with Heaven ?

*Jacq.* If it be not too late.

*Barb.* Well, when she 's won.

*Jacq.* (*producing a paper and an ink-horn.*)  
Just say that much herein.

*Barb.* Thou faithless jade !

*Jacq.* 'T is but to sign. — You know the proverb,  
Signor.

*Barb.* (*looks over the paper, signs, and returns it.*)  
Art satisfied ? — Now say — at what fixed hour  
Shall we attempt her ?



*Jacq.* If the sky be fair,  
Just as the ruddy evening streaks are fading,  
The place I 've named is her accustomed seat :  
Night, and the moon, will favor after. Now,  
My lord, if all be answered, and if all  
Be understood, we best had separate.

*Barb.* Farewell, my girl. All 's settled, as I think.

*Jacq.* How long before you venture her in Florence ?

*Barb.* When all her scruples vanish ; when she smiles,  
And treats me as a husband, and will swear  
Not to betray me.

*Jacq.* Bind her strongly there. —  
Farewell ! be watchful, and be resolute.

*Barb.* When do you quit them ?

*Jacq.* O, I cannot tell :  
Not till the tumult 's over. So, adieu !

(*Exit BARBADECA.*)

Not till our compact 's sure. — If Cosmo wed her  
I have her — sealed ; and by the vengeful gods  
I pin her to the bond, or that divulge,  
Shall sink her lower than her eyes dare look.  
All hail the day, invoked, deferred so long !  
Freed from the abject lot imposed upon me  
By faithless, perjured man, — enriched, — revenged, —  
I 'll shrive, do penance, — peradventure deck  
Some shrine, and feed the holy candlesticks,  
Till virgin wax hath cancelled virgin shame.

(*Exit.*)

## SCENE III.

COUNT AMERIGO *alone in his apartment.*

*Count.* Had she been spared to me, the golden sheaf  
Of my domestic joys had now been perfect.  
But favoring Heaven yet promises my age  
A liberal harvest ; I dare breathe no murmur ;  
Vouchsafed a counterpart of her I lost,  
So near, so dear, that her pure spirit seems  
Abiding with me. Soul of gentleness !  
Dear image of thy mother ! so thou 'rt happy,  
Peace harbours yet with old Amerigo.  
Methought, to-day, her cheek was wan, her eyes  
Looked red with weeping. Every gracious influence  
Defend and nourish thee, for thou 'rt a plant  
Too tender for the nipping blasts of sorrow.  
Often, and earnestly, her mother wished  
That hers and Cosmo's kindred natures ——

*(Enter COSMO.)*

*Cos.* God bless thee, uncle.

*Count.* Thanks, my son.

*Cos.* If you 're at leisure, I would crave a moment.

*Count.* Sit down ; I 'll hear thee gladly. — But thou  
art pale,

Nay, very pale.

*Cos. (seating himself.)* I 'm well, Sir, — never better. —

'T is now ten years since I was left an orphan ; —  
You took me home, — have been a father to me, —

Had my own lived, he could not have done more,  
But yet — yet — there 's a boon — one boon —

*Count.* My son,  
Demand with confidence, for I 'll deny  
Nothing to thee.

*Cos.* My lord, — you have a daughter —  
Give me — bless me, I mean —

*Count.* Your suit is granted.  
I have indeed a daughter, dear to me  
Above all price ; but to your proven honor  
I dare entrust her.

*Cos.* Thanks, uncle — thanks — O, thanks —

*Count.* O, Cosmo, but *one* like her ever lived ! —  
Like a chance violet, that springs ere frosts  
Are over, whose brief date each one foretells,  
She ever seemed ; yet she survives, and blooms.  
O cherish her with tenderest sympathy,  
Watch o'er her peace with soft solicitude ;  
So shall she flourish and adorn thy fortunes.  
Neglect would kill her. Now forgive my plainness. —  
I see thou 'rt moved — forgive — I 'll say no more.  
Nay, nay, my son — (*Taking his hand affectionately.*)

*Cos.* Perhaps — perhaps —

*Count.* I greet thee as my son, — my chosen son, —  
And tell thee frankly, I know not another  
In the world's range to whom I would commit her.  
This has Heaven's seal : — her mother blesses ye : —  
My heart is now at rest.

*Cos.* Praise Heaven, then, uncle, —  
A quiet bosom 's — O ! 't is priceless, priceless —  
None knows its value but the wretch who 's lost it. —

But you are doubly blest, my lord.

*Count.* What says my son?

*Cos.* You 've two fair daughters.

*Count.* And virtuous too,

As well as fair.

*Cos.* No doubt. And, now, my lord,  
Strengthen a mother's with a father's blessing: —  
Make Cosmo and Olivia rich indeed.

*Count.* (*rising, in surprise.*) Olivia!

*Cos.* Sir, your blessing.

*Count.* Olivia?

*Cos.* What means my lord?

*Count.* Was it Olivia's hand?

*Cos.* The same, my lord.

*Count.* Ha! — but, Cosmo, —

Know'st thou — art thou aware —

(*Tenderly, and irresolutely.*) Surely, my son,  
It was my younger child.

*Cos.* (*suppressing emotion.*) You much mistook me.

*Count.* I labored in a grievous error, Cosmo, —  
My thoughts were on Demetria.

*Cos.* Still dost thou grant Olivia to my love?

*Count.* (*after a pause.*) If Cosmo ask it.

*Cos.* I do. And, prithee, no delays,  
For I must leave ye.

*Count.* Leave us!

*Cos.* Bellona 's loose: —

The trumpet brays again: — my regiment  
Is summoned, or soon will be. I have seen  
The rescript. Furious Achmet swears to leave  
Belgrade as level as the Oman desert,

And light Vienna with more moons than stars.  
Farewell, my lord : you 've done me honor.

(*Exit.*)

*Count.* Amazement ! —

I thought he meant to dwell in peace among us ! —

What change is this ? — Alas ! I fear, I fear

Her soul is set on him. — I, too, have helped it : —

Still must I dwell on him and magnify

His virtues. Whence can such mischance — He  
loved her —

He surely loved her, — every act proclaimed it. —

Ah me ! who 'll break these tidings ? — Who can an-  
swer 't ? —

Great God ! this is a stroke I had not looked for.

(*Exit.*)

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The pavilion, beside the Arno : — a table, lute, and drawing implements : — DEMETRIA seated near a window opening to the evening sky.*

*Dem.* I feared some evil chance. — O! Cosmo, Cosmo!

Have I deserved such bitter punishment? —  
 If thou hast ceased to love, methinks, at least,  
 Thou mightst have broke the heavy truth more gently!  
 Such looks! such coldness! O, they chill to death.  
 Knowing the child I am in my affections,  
 Thou shouldst have weaned me tenderly. It had been  
 A generous tribute paid a wretch whose peace  
 Is gone for ever. — What can I have done? —  
 Sure, he 's not angered that I listed not  
 His suit, while tears (renewed at sight of him)  
 Streamed for a buried mother. — 'T were not like him: —  
 It cannot be. (*Pauses.*) O, time! — a change indeed! —  
 The night before he left us, here we sat;  
 Yon trees, the sky, the yellow-gleaming hills;  
 Thus beautiful! Then, when I weeping wished  
 To ope the volume of futurity,  
 How he consoled me! How he spoke, the while,  
 Of fading friendships, of forgotten love,  
 And when I warned him how new scenes, new hopes,  
 The intoxicating world, renown, and grandeur,  
 Might banish from his heart the faithful friends

And simple joys he loved at Belvederé,  
Ah! what a look he gave me! — All forgotten! —  
Had I foreseen it, — could I have believed it! —  
The long, long interval, — and now at last,  
The death of hope — O, Cosmo! Cosmo!

*(Overcome with emotion, covers her face.)*

It cannot last — my heart is not so stubborn. —

*(Unties a small parcel of letters lying on the table.)*

This reached me, — O! I well remember it, —  
My hand clasped fast in my sweet mother's! — Hours  
Of rapture! that 't is death to think on now! —  
One parting look, and I have done.

*(Unfolds a letter, which she peruses with a fluctuating countenance. Meanwhile a fishing boat, containing two persons in masks, glides from behind a woody point towards the pavilion. The Masks step out, and approach Demetria, who is too much abstracted to perceive them.)*

*First Mask.* Well, Signorina, —

*Dem.* *(springing up.)* Ha! what seek ye here?

*First Mask.* No treachery. Can you tell us —

*Dem.* *(retreating.)* Heavens! Why do you follow me?

*First Mask.* *(still advancing.)*

We lost our way, Madonna, — we stopped here —

*(Seizing her.)*

No noise, — no screaming, — not, as life is dear, —  
Be still — hush! hush! — no harm shall come to ye.

*(Forces her towards the boat.)*

*Dem.* *(tearing his hand from her mouth.)*

Help! — mercy! — help!

*Second Mask. (covering her mouth.)*

Hush! — silence! — else the Arno's near —

*(Just as they lay hands on her, Cosmo is seen approaching with a gloomy air along the path from the wood. Startled by her cry, he stops to observe; then rushes towards her with frantic speed, arriving, as she faints and they are proceeding to lay her in the boat.)*

Cos. Ha, ruffian!

*(Stabs one of the Masks, who falls in the water:—the other retreats a step, draws, and advances fiercely upon him. Cosmo wounds him, and pressing him, he leaps into the boat and pushes off.)*

What fiends are these?

*(Tears off the mask of the fallen man.)*

What can it mean?

*(Raising Demetria in his arms.)* How pale!

Good heaven! she's dead — or dying! What's the best?

Merciful Father! — is there none to help me? —

*(Hangs over her in terror, sprinkling water in her face.)*

She's gone! — her cheek's death white! — Demetria!

My angel! O my only love! Have I

Frowned on thee? I been angry? — Now, she's gone!

Curse, curse upon my cruelty! (DEM. sighs.) She lives! She breathes!

*(Loosens her sash, and bears her to one of the seats of the pavilion.)*

Demetria! — speak! — O, speak to me!



How deep — heart-breaking was that sob! — Ha! hold!

*(He retires a little, and stands watching her :  
in a few moments she half rises, and looks  
wildly round, without perceiving him.)*

Dem. Where am I? Was it — could it be a dream?  
Methought a sweet and mournful voice, but now,  
Was murmuring in my ear — *(Perceives Cosmo.)*

Cos. *(coming forward.)* How farest thou, lady?

Dem. Have I been dreaming, or a moment since  
Was set upon?

Cos. Your piercing cries alarmed me.  
Know you the villains?

Dem. No, my lord.  
What came of them?

Cos. One fled; the other lies there.

Dem. *(seeing his sleeve stained with blood.)*  
Heavens! art thou wounded, Cosmo?

Cos. *(with deep emotion.)* Wounded? — No, —  
He only grazed me.

Dem. O! you bleed apace!

Cos. There are — there is a wound —  
*(Falters and pauses.)*

Lady, your handkerchief — pray bind it there —  
*(She knots her handkerchief round his arm.)*

Dem. Let me assist you homeward — Lean on me —  
You're growing paler.

Cos. *(rises, and sinks back.)* Yes — I have a  
wound —

Deep — mortal, — that the grave must answer.

Dem. *(terrified.)* O, heaven! —

Cos. A stab most cruel — but a bloodless one.

*Dem. (her eyes resting on the floor.)* My lord, —  
Will 't please you to escape the chill night air?

*Cos.* And wherefore? — 't is not like a cold false heart.

*Dem. (gathers up the letters, and binds the riband round them, while Cosmo sits speechless, watching her.)*

Here are some letters, — which, — my lord, — in days  
Best now forgotten — (*Faintly.*) Receive them, Sir.

*Cos. (grasping the letters.)* All very well.

*Dem.* You had a picture — valueless indeed —  
A little portrait, — will you give it me?

*Cos.* A picture?

*Dem.* Scarcely worth remembrance —

*Cos. (who had involuntarily put his hand into his bosom, withdraws it.)*

Lady, — that picture — I was robbed — one night,  
Crossing a forest in the Tyrol mountains —  
In a dark gorge, some brigands rushed upon me —  
They took purse, ring, and all, — a precious ring, —  
I much deplored the chance. — The ring I had  
From an Archduchess' daughter.

*Dem.* I 'll send you aid.

(*Passes him swiftly, and leaves the pavilion.*)

*Cos. (watching till she disappears.)* So then —  
all 's over! —

Here are my letters — scorn'd — given up ; — though  
dyed

With my heart's blood! — O, murderous memory!

(*Lays them down, and looks round him.*)

Beside that lattice I confessed my passion, —

Yon eglantine she drew to shade her face ! —

O, heaven ! — O, hell ! —

*(Starts up, tears the letters in fragments, and hurries away into the thick part of the wood.)*

## SCENE II.

*A corridor, near a chamber door :—* BIANCA *passes cautiously along.*

*Bian.* That cabinet will skreen me. — By and by I 'll take my stand. — I may o'erhear yet more ;  
Or, some way, take her in her craft. — How now !  
What light is that gleams from the Countess' chamber ?  
Who should be there ? —

*(Listens a moment, and then exit softly.)*

## SCENE III.

*An antique chamber : the walls tapestried : on one side of the bed, a picture of the Countess Amerigo : — by the light of a lamp standing on a table before a mirror, DEMETRIA seen walking the room with a disordered mien.*

*Dem.* Married ! — To-morrow ! — Cosmo and Olivia !

Do not my senses pass some horrid juggle ?

Some slight of darkness but to lure my doom ? —

Hush ! — Shadows seem to flit around me. — Oh !

To-morrow! — my sister's wedding day! — O, where,  
Where, where, shall I be? —

*(Walks distractedly up and down: at last, stops  
before her mother's picture, bursting into tears.)*

O, mother! mother! why art thou not here? —

In vain are all thy cautions, — vain thy counsels! —

O! had I listened, — had I but believed thee!

Oft hast thou warned, prophetically warned me. —

Thy worst forebodings all have come upon me! —

Why, why, art thou not here? — O, could I pour

My anguish in thy bosom! — Could thy voice

But once more greet me! I 'm alone: — I 've none

To comfort me. Now, when my cry ascends,

Thou canst not hear! O, wert thou here, — couldst  
thou

But clasp me! —

*Enter BIANCA.*

*Bian.* Who 's here? — Signora, — my sweet child —  
What! is it you that sob so bitterly?

Be comforted: do not weep so.

*Dem.* Leave me.

*Bian.* Alone, in this dusk chamber? No indeed.  
It overcomes me too: it brings to mind  
Sorrowful times. When my dear lady died,  
Just so it looked, — heart-breaking to us all.  
Alack! alack! she, too, poor suffering soul,  
Although she smiles so sweet in yonder picture,  
Had griefs you little dream of.

*Dem.* What mean'st thou?

*Bian.* I know what ails thee, though thou speakest not.  
I read it all. Thy face has been my book  
Too long, sweet child. — My lady, too, was crossed.

*Dem.* My mother?

*Bian.* Oft at her bed's foot have I spent  
The weary watches, while her swelling heart  
Discharged its burthen.

*Dem.* Heavens! — I never heard ——  
Tell me, Bianca, —— crossed?

*Bian.* In love, Signora.  
Thou never heard'st it — no, nor any other.  
'T was known, indeed, the Marquis broke a love troth,  
But I alone was privy to the matter.

*Dem.* Tell me, Bianca, — how was this? It seems  
Most strange.

*Bian.* When just seventeen, she went to Naples,  
Where the Marchesa lived, her father's sister.  
The Marquis dwelt, you know, at Tivoli,  
A Roman born, and stern as Marcus Cato. —  
Three months she lingered. Well, soon afterwards  
A handsome Gascon chevalier came to us,  
Tall, graceful, handsomer by far than Cosmo.  
His looks betrayed his business; and her eyes  
Spake too intelligibly. One and all  
Imagined we must part with our loved mistress,  
Not dreaming that her father would oppose her.

*Dem.* Did he, Bianca?

*Bian.* Don't look so wild, and speak so passionate. —  
Next morning they were closeted, and brief work  
He made of it. If she took Count Démétrée  
(His name), he swore she forfeited for ever  
His presence, heart, and dying benediction.

*Dem.* O! my poor mother, how must this  
Have fallen on thee!

*Bian.* Being called in haste,  
I found my lady swooned, the Marquis wroth,  
The stranger gone.

*Dem.* Why was this cruelty ?

*Bian.* Because the Marquis loathed a Huguenot.

*Dem.* Inhuman !

*Bian.* All that day, my lady kept  
Fainting, and, as it were, 'twixt life and death.  
The next night she dismissed me to my rest ;  
But waking, and afraid she lacked, I softly  
Stole to her chamber. Think of my amazement ! —  
Her bed was empty, — the balcony open !  
It jutted o'er the garden, and I heard  
Murmurs like plaintive voices. Looking out,  
I saw them. Then, indeed, I lent an ear : —  
I feared her flight : the slant moon showed it mid-  
night :

The snort and stamp of horses made me think  
All things were ready ; (so indeed they were ;)   
But filial duty triumphed. O ! their parting ! —  
At first he urged her, but at last consoled.  
In fine, they bade adieu, to meet no more.

*Dem.* And did they never ?

*Bian.* Ere a year,  
He fell in Flanders.

*Dem.* Luckless, luckless mother !  
Whom hadst thou then to comfort *thee* ?

*Bian.* No soul. She knew no comfort. Life  
Wore on, without complaint, but never gladdened.  
At last, I told her what I saw ; and then  
She gave me all her story.

*Dem.* Ah! —

Methinks I hear her! — O, how looked she? — Say,  
Bianca, — give to me her very tones.

*Bian.* Meek, patient; striving still to cheer the Mar-  
quis;

Who fell, at last, into a melancholy.

*Dem.* Now, now, I know why clouds came over thee  
As often as we questioned of thy youth.  
Well mightst thou warn me, — feelingly couldst thou  
Enlarge on such a theme.

*Bian.* Time blunted sorrow;  
But never was my lady what she had been  
In her May morning.

*Dem.* Yet a seraph smile  
Plays yonder round her lip.

*Bian.* Yourself, Signora,  
A tiny, blue-eyed thing lay in my arms,  
Brimful of glee, reaching your little hands  
As if to tempt her. 'T is at you she smiles.

*Dem.* (*going towards the picture.*)  
Was it on me? — did I draw forth that smile? —  
Ah! why not told ere this? — That I had known  
Thy story, too! Couldst thou so sweetly smile?  
Couldst thou seem happy, and shall I complain?  
Just Heaven, forgive my wild designs. I'll suffer: —  
I'll bear it all: — though sorrows overwhelm me,  
I'll never murmur for her angel sake.

*Bian.* (*Falling on her knees, and clasping Demetria's feet.*)

O, now I'm happy, — blest and happy, —  
Ah! my sweet child, I heard thy bitter wail;

I heard thy dreadful menaces. Praise Jesu !  
Thou hast abandoned them. Though judgments fall  
With weight upon thee, threat not life. My child,  
Self-murder is a sin unpardonable :  
No rite, mass, sacrament, nothing can reach it !  
Think ! Should she stretch from bliss in vain to save  
A suicidal outcast ——

*Dem.* Stop ! stop ! — O, speak not thus ! — 'T is dreadful ! — Heaven

Forgive the impious thought ! — I 'll bear it. — Rise.  
But O ! I hope the trial will not last !  
When, when, may I lie down in peace ?

*Bian.* Be cheered,  
Sweet lady ; strength will be vouchsafed ye.

*Dem.* No, —

But is it settled ? Will it be to-morrow ?

*Bian.* I fear.

*Dem.* What says she ? Has she asked to see me ?

*Bian.* No, Signora.

*Dem.* Cruel, cruel sister !

I would not so have marred thy peace, to gain  
A world.

*Bian.* Kin are not kind, in this we live in —  
One would imagine. — But they 're both a tiptoe. —  
Malicious serpent ! — Mark my words — that slut  
Hath scorpions at her conscience. Late last night  
Crossing the upper corridor, there came  
A moan as from her chamber ; stopping by it,  
I heard her muttering in her sleep a jargon —  
The horriddest jumble ever put together — about  
Some funeral, or marriage ceremony.



O, yes, I 'm certain something damning weighs  
Upon her. "Quick," she cried, "the nuptial pall!  
Call in the music!—screw the lid!—Foh! foh!"  
She named that Barbadeca twice, and whispered,  
"Be secret, secret, secret,—but no blood."  
And then she 'd groan. I could not make her drift;  
But am resolved to watch again to-night.  
Pernicious viper! now she 's with Olivia  
Fingering the bridal ornaments——

*Dem.* Bianca! Oh! Bianca!—

*Bian.* Take heart, Signora.

*Dem.* Would I were in my grave.

*Bian.* Something is wrong.—

Look at him, if his woe-gone face be lit  
With nuptial smiles. He locks himself apart,  
Or roams about, as restless as a ghost;  
Trust me, he loves thee still, and some vile wretch  
(That imp—who knows?) has some how slandered  
thee.

*Dem.* It cannot be.

*Bian.* I 'd risk my life 't is so.

What else can so have changed him?

*Dem.* No—O no.

Whom have I injured? What could she say of me?

*Bian.* Thou fanciest every breast as pure as thine.

Let me expostulate with him, and know

If some false tale——

*Dem.* (*vehemently.*)

I charge thee, no—no, as thou lovest me.—What!

Degrade myself to that?—Sue for his pity?—

Seek to reclaim a fickle lover?—Never!

I charge thee as my peace—my *life* is dear,  
Never to do it. Promise.—swear to me.

*Bian.* Be calm, be calm, Signora; I'll obey thee.

*Dem.* If *he* can harbour slanderous tales against me,  
He ne'er shall know his error, till too late.  
But when my aching heart's at rest for ever—  
Then,—if he finds he wronged me,—let him come  
And weep his hard suspicions where I lie.

*Bian.* (*taking the lamp and Demetria's arm.*)  
Come, lady, let us leave this gloomy chamber:—  
Yon grisly heathen in the tapestry  
Scowl on us;—verily they daunt me:—come.  
(*Leads her out.*)

#### SCENE IV.

*The garden, at midnight: the sky lowering. COSMO enters without a hat: after wandering about disturbedly, throws himself on the ground.*

*Cos.* O that I were a shackled slave!—the wretched'st

That ever earned the bread of toil!—Marry her!  
What, marry—I cannot—O, no, no—  
What fiend seduced?—what worse than frenzy—  
Oh!

To-morrow—and farewell to hope—linked, linked,  
Indissolubly linked to life-long woe!—  
Where, now, are all those dreams of bliss,  
So dear, so tender, they attuned my heart

To ecstasy? — Gone, perished, blotted out,  
With that fair, fancied excellence! — Can she  
Sleep sweetly while such billows toss my soul? —  
Yonder 's her chamber — Lies she there  
In tranquil slumber? Ah! who 's in her dream?  
Once — But never, never, never more! —  
Mountains have risen, oceans roll between us! —  
O! what a snare is tangled round me —

*Enter ORSINI.*

*Ors.* This way the sound was. — Ha!

*(Perceiving Cosmo on the ground.)*

Is this kind dealing, Cosmo?

Why not impart thy sorrows to a friend?

*Cos.* Intrude not here. Who spoke of sorrows?

Leave me.

*Ors.* Small skill have I in marriage mysteries,  
Or aught pertaining to the sex thou dotest on,  
But if *these* be the nuptial joys I came  
To witness, gods keep me ungyved, and grant  
No mistress but my sword. I thought to see  
A bridegroom's face caparisoned in smiles,  
Love-knots and wreaths of roses blooming round  
His voluntary chains; a merry prelude,  
Whatever might come *after*. But, by Heaven,  
When you came forth to welcome me, a thief's,  
A sentenced traitor's look was ne'er more haggard.  
Their faces all within seem clad in mourning.  
How savagely you answered, when I broke  
A harmless jest on your approaching bondage.

*Cos.* Death, poverty, or shame, — but name not that!

*Ors.* Why there it is! — Speak out. — What is it  
wings

Thy spirit thus? — I 've heard thy hasty step  
Beating the chamber; heard thee stealing out,  
And, on my soul, I knew not but thou 'dst come  
To do some rashness. Speak. What ails thee?

*Cos.* I 'm a wretch.

*Ors.* What cursed thing has happened?

*Cos.* I 'm betrayed.

Leave me.

*Ors.* Who has betrayed thee?

*Cos.* She, — the fiend

Who had my heart in keeping.

*Ors.* Weary not

My patience. Tell the plain, right onward story;

Then, if heart, sword, or honest counsel —

*Cos.* Remember'st — Know'st of whom so oft I  
spake?

*Ors.* Demetria.

*Cos.* O! I thought in her was summed  
All excellence, — so pure, so gentle, faithful —

*Ors.* I know you thought so.

*Cos.* Thought her heart my prize;  
Believed she loved me with a spotless passion.  
To see me wedded to this paragon  
I asked thy presence.

*Ors.* Well?

*Cos.* She 's false — I 'm cozened; —  
To serve her amorous purpose with another,  
She but dissembled.

*Ors.* What! and still thou wed'st her?

*Cos.* Wed'st? — O, heaven! —

No, no, I do not wed her! — Carlo! ah!

I'm not so blessed. For, spite of all, — wrongs, guilt,  
And shame, — spite of my soul, I love her.

*Ors.* Curse ——

And dost thou beat up this ado, because  
The cunning harlotry has spared thy name  
To brand dishonor elsewhere ?

*Cos.* No, I say.

*Ors.* What then ? Unfold your riddles.

*Cos.* That this, that this  
Were all ! — and yet 't were cause methinks. —  
*Orsini*, — O ! — to-morrow — curse upon it ! —  
Shackles me to Olivia.

*Ors.* (*checking surprise.*) Well, she 's fair,  
And stately ; what of that ?

*Cos.* I love her not ; —  
Have I not told thee ? — Every fibre clings  
To that deceiver.

*Ors.* Rash, misguided man !  
Thinking to pique her, make her feel, with all  
Her wiles she could not hurt thee, thou hast pulled  
Destruction on thy head.

*Cos.* Thou hast it.

*Ors.* Jove !  
I pity thee. How couldst thou be so mad ?  
Cast prudence clean away ? and fling the reins  
To wildest ——

*Cos.* Spare your breath : — I'm in no mood : —  
Go to the earthquake : — ask why it desolates.

*Ors.* But how was this discovered ? Who unmasked  
her ?  
Is it *proved* ? certain ?

*Cos.* As the hell that racks me.

*Ors.* But how? *how* proved?

*Cos.* By her own letter, —

A fair confession, written out — I saw it —

In her own hand. A maid, too, — honest soul, —

Told me the whole, — who'd seen their private meetings,

O'erheard their plots, and heard them jeer me.

*Ors.* Damn her!

For manhood, shame, waste not another sigh

On such a cockatrice. Drop on thy knees,

And bless the miracle of thine escape.

By Janus! he who not — who scorns not — bans not, —

Were fitter to squeak treble to a choir,

Be doorkeeper to a harem, shaveling monk,

Than to enroll himself with noble men,

And belt the warrior's glaive.

*Cos.* Thou know'st not what it is; —

O! that I could — curse, — hate her, — cast her off; —

But ah! she circles in the vital stream

That nourishes my heart: life stops without her.

*Ors.* Forbear! this sorceress has bewitched thee,  
Cosmo.

Think, what must follow such unmanly yielding:

This feebleness will tarnish every laurel,

Destroy thy peace for ever.

*Cos.* O, I know it.

Why tell of that? — Think'st thou I hope for peace?

Thou dost not *feel*, — thou canst not understand me.

*Ors.* Indeed, I feel; but as a soldier ought —

*Cos.* (*starting suddenly and grasping ORSINI.*)

She 's there! she 's there!

*(The lattice of DEMETRIA'S window uncloses, and, by the light burning within, she is seen before it. COSMO watches her with breathless emotion, holding ORSINI fast. In a few moments she retires, then reappears with her lute, and touches a melancholy air. COSMO hides his face on ORSINI'S shoulder.)*

O, heavens! the same, — the very same!

*Ors.* Beware! she hears thee.

*(Alarmed by their voices, DEMETRIA looks towards the spot where they stand; closes the lattice and retires.)*

*Cos.* The notes she struck the night I first beheld her! —

Both children. — Little, little I imagined —

O! that mine eyes had never seen her!

*Ors.* Gods!

If wishing would avail, I would wish too.

*Cos.* From that same hour I loved her, watched her spread

Into the matchless thing I left her. — Curse

Ambition! curse on glory! cursed be all

That made me leave her. Had I been wise and watchful,  
She had been spotless, I too happy! Now —

O! Carlo, Carlo! what does this drear world

Contain for me? — Ah! yes, one joy awaits me; —

I'm to be married, — married to another.

*Ors.* Come, come, let's not stay here all night.

*Cos.* What subtle fiend contrived this crown to misery?  
I might have dreamed upon her, — might have hoped; —  
Now, I'm to plunge lower than Erebus,

Deeper than hell, where not a dungeon glimmer  
Can cleave the solid darkness. O! that Honor  
Did not confront me —— tyrant! — well I know —  
I 'd not stand shivering on the brink ——

*Ors.* O, foul!

What, win her? fix the day? almost espouse her,  
And then desert?

*Cos.* Orsini, till this hour,  
I 've kept the path of honor. Need I now  
Thy counsel to sustain me? — There it is, —  
That idol chains me. — Were my fate but once  
Mine own, I know ——

*Ors.* It grieves me, dearest Cosmo, ——

*Cos.* Am not I, now, the veriest slave? — The blow,  
The only blow that *can* emancipate,  
Annihilates mine honor?

*Ors.* Give o'er such thoughts.

*Cos.* Leave me, Orsini. It is mockery  
To stuff my ears with womanish condolence.  
Am I not capable to scan my fate  
With eyes as keen as thine? Point me a straw,  
A gossamer, to snatch at, — any way  
To scape this pit of horrors —— Canst thou? ——  
Away, then! — Leave me to my solitude.

*Ors.* No, Cosmo, thou art mad with sorrow. Clouds,  
too,  
Are gathering ——

*Cos.* Honest Carlo, prithee leave me.  
Dost apprehend violence upon myself?  
Look! — here 's my dagger, — take it. On my soul  
I 've now no weapon. — Only leave me.



*Ors.* Ah! —

Is this a place, or hour, for meditation?

Come, Cosmo, come; return with me to shelter.

*(Takes hold of him.)*

*Cos. (grasping ORSINI.)*

Must I be penned in corners? watched? schooled?  
bayed?

Lose my last privilege? — Back! — I warn thee! —  
Back!

Follow me not.

*(Thrusts ORSINI from him, and exit down the garden.)*

*Ors. (looking after him.)*

'T is mockery, indeed. — His passion swells

Beyond all governance. I could weep too. —

Must this go on? — Is there no remedy? —

How if his uncle should step in? — Were 't best? —

But who can break with him? — I dare not do it: —

First, being but a stranger; then my friend

Would hold himself dishonored and betrayed. —

I fear he is undone! — Most fatal rashness! —

Poor wretch! — I dare not leave him out all night.

Here, in this arbour, I will watch awhile.

*(Retires.)*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *A magnificent saloon, illuminated with festive splendor: crowds of cavaliers and ladies engaged in conversation, or dancing, or walking about. The family of Belvederé dispersed among the company. ORSINI aloof, in observation.*

*Ors.* Pray Heaven, good come of it! — Poor thing! This wrings her soul. I see it; and 't is strange! — Is that a face of cunning? — Can a look Of bosomed grief like that conceal a heart So black? (*Gazing round.*)

Tinsel! all tinsel to pure gold!  
Never saw I the form of loveliness  
So near angelic, beauty exquisite  
As Guido's dreams. Well might he wail her loss;  
If no foul play, — which I indeed suspect.

(*A cavalier approaches ORSINI, who turns away to avoid him.*)

*Cavalier.* (*accosting him.*)

Signor, a splendid company.

*Ors.* Truly, my lord.

*Cav.* Have you been long from Pisa?

*Ors.* No, my lord.

*Cav.* What lady is 't that sits alone — just there — Beneath the brilliant? — pale, — with a handkerchief, —

Left of the Cardinal and friar, — dressed  
In Padua green, bordered with silver? There —  
D' ye see her, Sir? — a chaplet of white flowers?

*Ors.* 'T is the Count's youngest daughter.

*Cav.* Ah! is it she? — the Dian Belvederé?  
For so admiring Florence calls her. Faith!  
The huntress Queen need shine her brightest. — Signor,  
Methinks this revelry displeases her.

*Ors.* Why so?

*Cav.* Observe her but a little: I have marked her. —  
While Cosmo and his bride knelt in the chapel,  
A shudder seemed to pass across her; drops,  
Great drops, not tears, stood on her face: she looked  
Like sculptured agony. Remarked you not?

*Ors.* I stood more distant, — watched less heedfully.

*Cav.* Nay, 't was apparent.

*Ors.* Parting with her sister, —  
The touching ceremony, — these might move her.  
Adieu, my lord. (*Bows and disappears in the crowd.*)

*Cav.* Truly; but scarce to such a fixed woe.  
De' Medici!

*2d Cav.* (*turning.*) Ha, Alighieri!

*1st Cav.* Know you that lady?

*2d Cav.* Which? in white?

*1st Cav.* The next.

*2d Cav.* O! —

That 's a divinity.

*1st Cav.* But by what title may she be invoked?

*2d Cav.* Her sect adores her under ten or twenty;  
As Daphne, Dian, Lucrece, La Madonna,

White Rose of Loveliness. — Why, know you not  
The darling of the name Amerigo?  
Enchanting, sweet, and gentle as the maids  
Vespucci tells of, Eves of his new world,  
That, plumed and garlanded, sing all day long  
Under the nodding palm-trees?

1st Cav. Pray present me.

2d Cav. Not know her?

1st Cav. No, in faith.

2d Cav. Come, then; — why, she 's the fairest star  
o' the night.

*(They move to the side where DEMETRIA sits.*

*Cosmo passes slowly by.)*

Cos. Dearly she 's paid the price! — Now, God! let  
loose

The elements! — Storm! wrack! make all like this  
Fell bosom! — Curse the tumult! — Twenty thousand  
Torches seem stuck about my brain! — Ha! who 's  
that? —

*(Seeing the two cavaliers address DEMETRIA,  
advances towards them. Folding doors are  
flung open; discovering a suit of apart-  
ments brilliantly lighted for the banquet. A  
grand symphony strikes up, and the company  
pass through.)*

## SCENE II.

DEMETRIA'S chamber. *A neglected lamp burning on the table: the room gloomy and silent, except at intervals the sound of music and merriment from the apartments below. DEMETRIA enters, throws herself into a chair, and sits, for some time, as if gazing at the light.*

Dem. 'T is past! — Mine eyes have seen it! — What  
is left

For me? — The power of Heaven cannot recall it! —

'T is registered in that Eternal Book

Where all irrevocable things are written! —

Those timbrels mock me. — Would, I could not hear  
them! —

*(Looking round the room.)*

Dark, dark! — like my destiny! — My spring-time

Passed swiftly, — sweet as transitory! — Already

The frosts of autumn gather hoar around! —

The sear leaf falls. — I had a mother, — she

Moulders beneath the sod: — a lover — Hark! —

How their bursts of merriment shake the roof! Now,  
now,

The bridegroom pledges! now the smile illumines

A thousand eyes, a thousand tongues repeat

The plaudit! — Poor Demetria! who thinks of thee?

Darkness may cover thee, storms beat on thee,

And none regards it: — sorrow finds no heart-room.

*(After a short silence, convulsed by one or two deep sobs, she rises.)*

Hail! then, thou lowly bed! where sighing is hushed,  
Where love comes not, and grief forgets to feel!  
Chambers of everlasting stillness! there  
I'll lay me. — Mother! mother! we will sleep  
Together! — (*Goes hastily into her boudoir; whence,  
after a few moments, she returns, trembling,  
and mortally pale.*)

I've pledged thee, Cosmo! — Now the seal is set! —  
And I am plighted to a grimmer bridegroom!  
Soon, soon, I shall be wedded too! — Let none  
Judge harshly of me! — O! I could have borne  
The direst accidents of fortune; — seen  
Every dear friend fall off; — been left alone  
In this wide world, and waited patiently  
The hour appointed. But to be despised, —  
A cast-off by the heart thou lovest, — there,  
There's the insufferable pang! (*Rings.*)  
Will this affect him? this becloud his triumph?  
(*Enters the inner room again, and returns with  
her hat and mantle.*)

Father! — that I could say farewell to thee! —  
May angels comfort thee when I am gone!  
(*Rings again and goes to the window.*)

The moon withdraws her face, and scarce a star  
Looks out to cheer me. (*Still gazing.*) Beyond your  
shining spheres  
Far, far, must I explore! — O! that I knew  
The place, the Paradise where she inhabits,  
And could attain it! — Who shall guide? or what  
Assurance have I —

*Enter* BIANCA, *who starts back on seeing* DEMETRIA.

*Bian.* Jesu defend us! — Whither art thou going? —  
I thought thee at the banquet. — Where art going? —

*Dem.* To walk.

*Bian.* Walk! at this hour? alone?  
What mean ye? — For Heaven's sake tell me.

*Dem.* Hear me, Bianca, —

*Bian.* Give me thy mantle, child. Thou 'rt pale :  
thine eyes

Roll wildly —

*Dem.* Hear, Bianca. — When I 'm gone,  
Be sure you lay me near her side.

*Bian.* (*terrified.*) She raves! —  
What means my darling child? — Gone where?

*Dem.* Dost hear me? —

When I 'm away, — you then may tell him. —  
Say to my father — say — I prayed — I blessed him.

*Bian.* (*falling on her knees and clasping her.*)  
Stay! stay! my gracious lady — 't is dark night!  
O, whither wouldst thou? — This is frantic madness.

*Dem.* (*with a desperate calmness.*)

Unclasp your hold. — I am not mad. — Obey me.  
In the pavilion you will find me.

(*Exit.*)

*Bian.* She 's crazed! —

Go forth at such a time! — How strange she looked!  
How hollow-toned! She waxes desperate,  
And may be tempted to some dreadful act.

(*Exit in terror.*)

## SCENE III.

*An apartment communicating with the suit of rooms terminating in the saloon; where the company is again assembled. The noise of revelry heard, and the dancers seen at a distance passing quickly to and fro. BIANCA and a Servant enter from an opposite direction.*

*Bian.* Call Signor Cosmo!—Fly!—Bid him be instant!

*(Exit Servant towards the saloon.)*

It has undone her. — It shall go no further, —  
O, precious child! — The saints watch over thee! —  
Mother of Jesu! guard her life, beseech ye!

*(Enter Cosmo from the saloon.)*

So then — you 've murdered her! — False! treacherous! —

You 've killed my sweetest lady! — Shame eternal! —

*Cos.* What! — murdered! — who?

*Bian.* You 've broke her heart —

Curse on such cruelty! Judgment, I hope,  
Will overtake it.

*Cos.* Hag, what mean'st thou?

*Bian.* Ask

Your conscience! — or 's that seared? — My child,  
My sweetest lady, — poor Demetria —

*Cos.* What of her?

*Bian.* She 's gone distracted.

*Cos.* *(starting.)*

Distracted! — who? — where is she?



*Bian.* Shame!

Shame! shame! you wooed her, won her gentle heart;  
Forsook her basely; — married with her sister.

*Cos.* I did; for she was false.

*Bian.* (*violently.*) False! who was false?

*Cos.* Ay, — she betrayed me.

*Bian.* Palsied be the tongue

That calls her false! She was as true as angels!  
If you dare call her false —

*Cos.* I know it — I can prove it — have the letter.

*Bian.* What letter?

*Cos.* Yes, to Barbadeca.

*Bian.* Letter! Barbadeca! — Horrors!

Whence came it? Tell me truly, I conjure thee.

*Cos.* From Jacquelina: — she detected them:  
She knows — has seen their meetings.

*Bian.* (*staggering backwards.*) Quick and dead!  
'T is so! — now, now, the dreadful light breaks in!  
O, fool, fool, fool! — and you, for this, forsook her?

*Cos.* Yes; was it not a reason?

*Bian.* A reason! O, sweet heavens, a reason! —  
I say she loves you, — ever has adored you; —  
O! that I 'd spoken! — all the while I thought,  
I thought some hellish fraud was at the bottom.

*Cos.* For God's sake speak: — torture me not: —  
Why think ye that she loves me? on what proof?

*Bian.* Hear briefly, Signor. — If I warp the truth,  
Forked lightnings end me. You have been tricked,  
deceived,  
Most vilely tricked. That letter — what it is,  
I know not; but if in ought it implicate

Or charge Demetria, 't is as false as hell,  
In whose abyss 't was forged. For I can swear —  
Anon I 'll give you proof — how true she was.  
Two nights, I 've heard that serpent who deceived thee,  
Muttering in sleep. She named this Barbadeca,  
As if, with her, in some deep villany  
Compacted ; groaned, and tossed, like one in torments.  
Last night, she cursed him ; oft invoked Demetria ;  
Talked of a trunk down somewhere, and a letter ;  
And cried : " O ! spare me ! O ! he set me on ! "

*Cos.* Merciful Heaven !

*Bian.* Your name she uttered, twice  
Or thrice ; and mumbled of the coming marriage.  
There 's foulest treachery somewhere : — she is deep  
in 't. —

But, as I hope for masses for my soul,  
So sure, my lord, she loved you to her heart's core.  
Last night, I came upon her all alone,  
Talking, and weeping, to her mother's picture : —  
Most bitterly she took your altered vows,  
And her abandonment.

*Cos.* Earth, swallow me !

*Bian.* I forced her to commune, and did implore  
Leave to inquire if any slanderous tale  
Had thus estranged you ; but with adjurations,  
And, as I loved her honor, she forbade me.

*Cos.* Undone ! — Where is she ?

*Bian.* Now, this very moment,  
I found her in her chamber, nigh distraught.  
She bade me with a strange solemnity  
To lay her near her mother. Other charges

She sadly left with me. Follow her, Signor :  
Some desperate purpose ——

*Cos.* Follow ! where is she ?

*Bian.* Gone wandering forth alone, toward the pavilion.

I begged her on my knees ——

(*Cosmo rushes out.*)

Well may ye falter ! — O, that I had spoken ! —

O, that I had disregarded ! — Twice I rose

To seek him, but her solemn charge withheld me. —

It would have saved a noble house from ruin ! —

Where be my lord the Count ? — Alack ! alack !

(*Exit into the saloon.*)

#### SCENE IV.

*The wood : the villa seen across the grounds, blazing with lights : DEMETRIA enters, her hair loose and flying.*

*Dem.* She pities me, — she sheds a watery gleam, —  
And the wind moans —— Once more, once more ——

(*Stops, and fixes her eyes, with a long and steadfast gaze, on the mansion.*)

Happy ! — too happy, once ! — Now I must leave ye, —  
Dear natal bowers ! —— Remembered joys ! —— ye  
rise, —

Ye swell my heart ! —— I scarce can look my last ——  
How proud the symphony ! —— How the light turns  
Everything to enchantment ! —— There 's her chamber ! ——

The torches glitter there —— Why linger? wherefore?  
—— Why ——

(*Turning away.*)

My hour is come! Dark bridegroom, take me now!

(*Exit.*)

## SCENE V.

*The pavilion. DEMETRIA appears from the wood ; totters into it, and sinks upon a seat.*

*Dem.* I feel it — shooting through my heart : — the  
hand

Of death is on me. Now, the parting comes. ——  
'T is dismal! — Would I had some friend to cheer me ; —  
Some kindly breast to lay my head upon! —  
To die — alone ——

(*Suddenly clasping her hands.*)

—— That 's not the worst!

O! mother, intercede! — go prostrate! — plead!  
Wrestle, ah! wrestle for me, mother! — Clasp Her feet,  
And say I could have borne aught, aught but this! —  
Thou mayst prevail — thou mayst embrace me yet! —  
O, hear'st thou? — Give some sign — *Dear* mother,  
Whisper me! breathe upon me! — O! some sign! ——  
Alas! alas! all things are silent! —— Ha!  
Who 's here?

(*Cosmo throws himself at her feet, unable to speak.*)

Whom do you seek for here, my lord?

*Cos.* I'm come to grovel here for pardon. Canst thou  
Forgive a wretch like me? *Demetria,* —— Oh!

I've wronged thee, — injured thee past all forgiveness, —  
But never yet have been so cursed as not  
To love thee.

*Dem.* Rise, my lord, and leave this place.

*Cos.* Never, no never, never will I quit  
Thy feet, till thou hast sealed my pardon. Love,  
We've been undone by fiendish treachery!  
The Foe of all has twined me in his snare; —  
That moment, when I vowed to love another,  
My soul clung to thee, — clung in agony.  
Not for one breath, one heart-beat, have I ceased  
To love thee. Canst thou, spotless Purity,  
Pardon my sin, in giving ear to slanders?

*Dem.* Ha, Cosmo! hast thou foundered on that rock?

*Cos.* O, 't was so subtly laid! Fool! fool! I knew,  
I might have known, that angels sin not. Yet,  
So cunningly — I sought to rend the toils,  
But could not. O! Demetria, canst thou, wronged  
So cruelly, forgive the wretched Cosmo?

*Dem.* I know not whom I've injured? — Who could fix  
A stain upon me?

*Cos.* The child of hell that tends  
Thy sister, mastered me by some strong spell:  
Made me believe your heart was Barbadeca's,  
And I but trifled with, to veil your passion.

*Dem.* Heavenly powers! — O, Cosmo, Cosmo! —  
How couldst thou credit such a tale? — my heart! —  
Mine? — Barbadeca's? — O, how couldst thou?

*Cos.* Fiends, fiends,  
With hellish potions overcame my reason.  
'T is done, — 't is past, — my peace is justly wrecked! —

Forgive me, matchless Innocence ; then cast  
Me from remembrance : never think again  
On one so damned.

*Dem.* Take my pardon, Cosmo ;  
Would it were healing, as 't is freely given.  
I fain would hear the mournful story ; know  
What frauds can so have wrought upon thy nature,  
Upright and noble as I know it is. —  
But 't is too late. — My Cosmo, we must part, —  
Death's finger is upon me.

*Cos.* (*recoiling.*) Thou hast not ! —

*Dem.* Ah ! Cosmo ! — sorrows pressed so heavily —  
Weak and alone — my constancy gave way —  
I thought in one oblivious draught —

*Cos.* So then,  
I 've murdered thee ! O, horror ! horror ! where  
Is there a depth, dark as my reprobation ?

*Dem.* Don't blame thyself so bitterly, my Cosmo,  
Because an evil star has crossed us here.  
Perhaps, hereafter, we may meet in peace,  
There, where the tongue of slander never stings,  
Where no malicious fate can part us.

*Cos.* Never —  
Never ! — Hope not for me.

*Dem.* Would thou couldst feel  
The peace, the bliss that settles at my soul ! —  
But now, disconsolate, alone, I thought  
To breathe my spirit out, as in the desert ;  
Nought looked upon me but the silent heavens ;  
No voice bemoaned me but the passing wind.  
Now, reconciled love is near me ; hope

And joy spring in my bosom. Hear'st thou not Music? — A sign some blessed one hovers near, Commissioned to receive me.

*Cos.* Must we part —

So newly met — Thou nothing know'st — not half, Not half the love that agonizes here!

*Dem.* Come near me, Cosmo: — let me lean upon thee: —

Nearer: — I 've loved thee long, and tenderly; — I love thee still, — and never while this soul Partakes of being, will thy virtues cease Their influence o'er me. Whether it be my lot To chant with white-stoled sisters, or to weep An outcast, never shall I, *can* I, cease To love thee. Let that soothe thine anguish. Now, In this last solemn hour, the sharpest pang I feel, is thus to leave thee here behind me Afflicted and alone. For I had thought To tread life's path beside thee, thought to share — It cannot be — I feel it here — a grasp, Like ice, benumbs me. Cosmo, let my prayer Prevail. — Waste not thy life in useless sorrow: — Be comforted — and cheer — my father.

*Cos.* Comforted! —

*Dem.* (*in a fainter voice.*) Be not deceived — O! by our loves, — by every hope, and fear, I charge thee, lift not thy rash hand against Thyself. O! 't is a solemn thing — That gleam Has faded: — Darkness, dread uncertainty, Oppress me. — Live — and pray for my unhappy —  
(*Her voice dies away.*)

*Cos.* Thou 'rt sinking! — dying! — O, for words,  
— utterance, —

Loved — loved — O, I am — I cannot —

*Dem.* (*her head resting on his bosom.*)

Ah, Cosmo! I have much to tell thee too —

More — many! — tender legacies — I 'd leave thee —

But shadows swim before me — shadows —

(*Dies.*)

*Cos.* (*for some time motionless.*)

Still? — Dead? — Her heart beats not! — Yes —

No —

Her pulse — All 's stopped! Dead! dead! I clasp  
her clay!

O sacrificed, O murdered angel! — This,

This is thy recompense! — Have I bereft

Those eyes of lustre? I broken that fond heart? —

What anguish must have driven her? — O, the pangs

The pangs her spirit suffered! — Thief! wretch! ca-  
tiff! —

I am too hateful! — Gentle, slaughtered angel!

One kiss — while life's perfume is on thy lips —

(*Kisses her : gazes on her awhile : kisses her again.*)

I ask no more than to partake thy lot!

(*Stabs himself and sinks by her side.*)





**HADAD,**

▲

**DRAMATIC POEM.**



TO  
THE VENERABLE  
ABRAHAM BEACH, D. D.,  
AS A TESTIMONY OF AFFECTION,  
THIS WORK  
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.



## INTRODUCTION.

THE peculiar feature of this poem is ascribable to the Book of Tobit, where the supernatural throws a mystical wildness over a touching narrative of human interests. A legend in the Talmud, also, mentions the appearance in Jerusalem, not far from the date here assigned him, of the most remarkable of our *dramatis personæ*.

The belief in a former intercourse between mankind, and the good and evil beings of the Spiritual World, harmonizes with the solemn twilight of the scriptural ages, and is sustained by many declarations of Holy Writ. The passages reciting the necromantic power of the Sorceress of Endor, the passion and discomfiture of the Spirit who was enamoured of the daughter of Raguel, and the Demonian possessions of a later period,—as explained by most commentators, supported by the common faith of the Christian world,—are simple narrations of actual occurrences. Dr. Clarke affirms, that to every unprejudiced reader of the Sacred Writings, it is evident they represent those who dealt with Familiar Spirits, “as actually possessing

a power to evoke the dead, to perform supernatural operations, and to discover hidden and secret things, by spells, charms, incantations, &c."\* Dr. Gray, in his observations on the Book of Tobit, which he considers as entitled to the credit of an authentic historical narrative, remarks: "With respect to the agency of Angels, there is nothing inconsistent with reason, received opinions, or Scripture, in supposing a limited superintendence of Superior Beings. We know, indeed, that, under the peculiar circumstances of the Jewish economy, the ministry of Angels was manifestly employed, in subserviency to God's designs; and that particular personages were occasionally favored with their familiar intercourse. It is likewise unquestionable, that, before the power and malevolence of Evil Spirits were checked and restricted by the control of our Saviour, their open influence was experienced." — Thus understood, the Scriptures offer scenes of unrivalled wildness and sublimity; agents, whose power and attributes are of unknown extent, who connect, on the authority of our Faith, the visible with the invisible world.

The particular epoch signalized by the rebellion of Absalom, is familiar to all. The simple manners which prevailed in Israel previously to the kingly government, and even during the life of Saul, had disappeared. Accelerated by the extensive conquests and the amazing wealth of David, history declares the dawn of that luxury to have become

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\* Adam Clarke, note on Exod. xxii. 18.

manifest, which advanced, in the reign of his successor, to a proverbial height of splendor.

Perhaps it may be as well to remind the reader, that Absalom, having avenged his sister by the death of his half-brother Amnon, fled to the court of his maternal grandfather, Talmai, king of Geshur, a principality in the neighbourhood of Damascus. At the expiration of three years, David was persuaded to recall him to Jerusalem, but refused, during two years more, to admit him into his presence. Being, at last, entirely restored to favor, he began to display a pomp characteristic of his haughty and magnificent spirit. He "prepared him chariots, and horses, and fifty men to run before him," and commenced a system of popular arts, which, rendered effective by his extraordinary personal beauty, and, probably enough, by his talents and achievements, seduced the affections of a great part of the nation from their venerable king. Though, under the severer light of Sacred History, this Achilles, or Alcibiades, of the Hebrews is regarded with a sort of prescriptive horror, his crime was no other than that for which Cœur de Lion, and many other *favorites* of history and romance stand accountable. David's vehement attachment proves him to have been not destitute of virtues, and they may naturally be supposed to have been of the heroic kind. Of his beautiful daughter we know no more, than that her personal attractions were thought worthy of mention by the sacred historian.

Hadad was the name of the contemporary sove-



reigns of Damascus. Nicholas of Damascus relates, that, after many battles, David signally defeated one of them near the Euphrates, together with Hadadezer, another Syrian monarch, whom he was attempting to succour; and adds, that the succeeding kings of Damascus took the name of Hadad.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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DAVID, *King of Israel.*

ABSALOM, } *his sons ; the latter yet a boy.*  
SOLOMON, }

HADAD, *of the blood royal of Damascus, an hostage in Jerusalem.*

MEPHIBOSHETH, *the son of Jonathan ; residing in David's palace.*

NATHAN, *the Seer.*

ZADOK, } *High Priests.*  
ABIATHAR, }

JOAB, *the Military Chief.*

BENAIAH, *Captain of the Cherethites and Pelethites, or Life-Guard.*

AHITHOPHEL, }  
HUSHAI, } *of the Royal Council.*  
MANASSES, }  
MALCHIAH, }

BALAAM-HADDON, *a Babylonish Mage.*

OBIL, *an Ishmaelite, keeper of the King's camels.*

MAUGRABIN, *an instrument of Hadad's.*

ABIMILECH, *Captain of a company of Ishmaelites.*

BAGOAS, *a Eunuch in the household of Absalom.*

Jews, Ishmaelites, Slaves, &c.

TAMAR, *the daughter of Absalom.*

MALCUTH, *wife of Obil.*

SARAH, } *wife and daughter of Abimilech.*  
ADAH, }

Ishmaelite women, &c.

SCENE. *Chiefly in Jerusalem.*



# H A D A D .

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## ACT I. .

SCENE I. *A hall in the palace of DAVID. MEPHIBOSHETH seated, attended by two Ethiopians.*

*Mephib.* Who lurks in yonder vestibule? — There flits  
A shadow there.

*Enter HADAD.*

*Had.* Ha, Prince, forsake the banquet?

*Mephib.* Young Syrian, he becomes that title better  
Who, midst his sons and captains, feasts, to-day,  
Envoys from proudest nations; tyrant Egypt,  
Elam, and Tyre, Assyria, and Damascus,  
Dusk princes from the east, and unknown south;  
All bearing to his coffers richest gifts,  
Fuming his pride with incense, courting league  
And amity with him, whose warlike name  
Even Ishmael's roving sons respect and fear.

*Had.* Dost thou — thou, whose illustrious grandsire  
wore

The crown of Israel, when young David's brows  
Were wreathed with oak-leaves in the wilderness,  
Renounce thy lineage, title, thy great name,

Because thou lack'st the chair and canopy? —  
Prince, in that unseen chamber where the Soul  
Sits shrouded with her winged ministry,  
Swifter than light and countless as the stars, —  
High aims, proud thoughts, inflexible resolves,  
And hopes that reach at glory, there is fixed  
The seat of Majesty.

*Mephib.* O, thoughts like these  
May grace the lips, but thou wilt live to find  
Power is the seat of Majesty.

*Had.* When clouds  
Lowered black as midnight o'er his head, who, now,  
Thinks nought can intercept the sun, and deems  
His throne immovable as holy Zion,  
What had his heart to lean on in the hour  
Of peril, but an old man's prophecy? —  
Less stable, Prince, than lineal rights like thine. —  
But to that golden prophecy he clung,  
Revolved it waking, slept to dream it o'er,  
Drew from it hope, and constancy, and courage;  
Else, had some cavern been his dwelling still,  
And not these roofs of cedar.

*Mephib.* Hadad, — no —  
Thou 'rt not so wild, to deem the abject wretch  
Mephibosheth presumes to think of rights?

*Had.* Glimmers thy natal star more dim than mine?  
Am not I here an hostage, poor, and powerless,  
Condemned to exile on the false pretence  
Of Syria's broken faith? destined, perhaps,  
To fill some Hebrew dungeon, while a son  
Of David sways the sceptre of Damascus?

Yet, singly here upon his wall-girt hill,  
I feel, and will assert, my claims, as proudly  
As in the halls of Hadad.

*Mephib.* Different far

Thy fate and mine. — Thy race survives : — a throne  
Awaits thee. Seated there, thou mayst restore,  
Avenge its greatness. I, alas ! a cripple, —  
(Wrecked doubly on that fatal Gilboa, —) what  
Can I, but weep and curse ? — Cut off from action,  
Like a dull Levite, I consume my life  
O'er chronicles that teach me what I 've lost : —  
Or in some niche of these — my master's halls —  
Observe their ways and comment.

*Had.* Rare ! O, rare !

Slayings and prayings ! — psalmody and love ! —  
War cries and canticles ! — wassail and sackcloth ! —  
Groanings, and making groan the bleeding nations !

*Mephib.* In the primeval day, the friends of God  
Dwelt in plain tents, or underneath some tree ;  
But see how this Prince-prophet builds his nest.  
Mark yonder pavement, like a limpid lake,  
Reflecting all things from its polished face ;  
Behold yon couches, wrought like kingly thrones  
With gold and ivory ; those Tyrian hangings,  
Garnished, and enter-tissued, till they mock  
The very tabernacle. Breathe the perfume  
From yonder bossy censers, sending up  
A silvery volume to the vaulted roof ; —  
There the lign-aloes wastes its precious sweets,  
Costlier than Ophir's dust. Look at his meats,  
His wines, the service of his table ; youths

About his cup fairer than Tammuz. See  
His wives, his concubines, whose annual waste  
Employs the looms of Egypt, whose dove necks  
Glitter with gems that might redeem a kingdom.

*Had.* Types, types of Paradise, my lord,  
Whose pleasures strain, so oft, his poet fancy!

*Mephib.* Nor is this all; his sons outstrip their sire  
In every wild device of luxury.

Poor Israel sweats to pamper their blown pride,  
Which, swollen and rank, breaks out, anon, in lust  
And murder. Never was a land so cursed,  
So trampled! — See the red-hand Absalom! —  
Is there a demi-god in Syria's temples  
A juster image of tyrannic pride? —  
Not Pharaoh's chariot prouder grinds the way,  
Or makes the dwelling of Osiris tremble  
As his audacious wheels the mercy-seat!  
His haughty spirit lightens in his eye,  
That, eagle-like, seems fixed on some far quarry:  
His Babylonish mantle, wrought with stars,  
And golden characters of strange device,  
Flames like a constellation; and the hoop,  
Half seen upon his brows, denotes a will,  
That, if it dared, would make a white head crownless.

*Had.* Interpret not so harshly. It denotes  
But David's heir, the eldest, noblest-born,  
Bravest, and most illustrious son of Israel.

*Mephib.* Ho! — by whose blood became he so?

*Had.* By blood which, had I shed in such a cause,  
I ne'er had washed the voucher from my hand.\*

\* Amnon's.

*Mephib.* But Daniel too —

Is he despatched? or has he sold his birthright?

*Had.* Ere *he* essay to curb this fiery people,  
Send him to still the bellowing oaks of Bashan.

*Mephib.* But, prithee, how know'st thou, or Absalom,  
That Adonijah, who, in valiant parts,  
Scarce yields to him the palm, and far outshines  
In peaceful virtues and unblemished fame,  
May not be chosen? — ay, or Solomon,  
Old Nathan's darling, son of David's age,  
Cherished like Joseph, whose ripe boyhood yields  
The promise of a mind that after times  
Will wonder at? The King was Jesse's youngest,  
And matched young Solomon in looks and years,  
When Samuel passed seven stately sons, to crown  
The shepherd boy. — Why dost thou fix thine eyes,  
As thou wouldst rend the secrets from my soul?

*Had.* But hast thou heard — or noted aught like this?

*Mephib.* Prince of Damascus, what is that to thee?  
If Saul and David, or if David's sons  
Dispute the throne, hath Syria aught to say?

*Had.* Nay, Prince, I meant but ——

*Mephib.* Meant to draw forth that  
Which Absalom, thy kinsman, burns to know;  
Thy more than kinsman — beauteous Tamar's sire!  
Tell him, Mephibosheth nor hears, nor sees,  
Nor hath, in these fair seeming days, a tongue.  
Slaves, to mine arbour.

(MEPHIBOSHETH *is borne out.*)

*Had.* He harps the fatal note, — young Solomon, —  
The scorpion of the brood, whose sting shall prove



Mortal to other than his foes. — (*Listens.*) The step  
Is Absalom's — 't is he — and opportunely.

*Enter ABSALOM.*

*Ab.* Hadad, thine uncle's envoys sup with me,  
In private, with the Tyrian: go, I prithee,  
And bid those chiefs of Issachar, whose cause  
Sped ill this morning. Say Ahithophel,  
Who friended them in council, meets with us. —  
But wherefore meditatest thou here alone?

*Had.* The son of Jonathan just parted from me.  
Being next him at the table, I refreshed  
His cup so oft, and spiced it so with vaunts  
Of Judah's glory, (subtler than the wine  
To work on Benjamin,) that in a rage  
He flung from me to cool his ferment here.  
I followed, as unconscious of offence,  
In hopes his drink or passion might let fall  
Something of import to you.

*Ab.* Dropped he aught?

*Had.* An ominous hint or two.

*Ab.* As how?

*Had.* Discoursing of the King, his power, and glory,  
I mentioned you as his undoubted heir.  
He eyed me with a look askance, implying  
More than his words, and craved to know why you,  
Or I, thought that, — commended Adonijah, —  
Then, with a smile of dark, malignant joy  
Which lighted up his murky eye, exclaimed,  
“Why not the *younger*? — nature's prodigy, —  
Son of old age, — the Prophet's favorite!  
What! did not Samuel consecrate a child?”

*Ab.* Malicious slave ! He sees what, like a barbed  
And venom'd shaft, hath rankled in me long.

The Seer and Joab plot against me.

*Had.* But think you that the King gives ear to them ?

*Ab.* I would not wrong my father. — He hath been  
Gracious to me and constant, and hath shown  
Tokens of love I cannot lightly bury.

*Had.* But did you note, my lord,  
The homage shown the boy before the envoys ?  
How they discoursed with him ? what costly gifts,  
Caresses, flattery, they heaped upon him ?  
Or watch the workings of your father's face,  
When the old Chaldee lifted up his hands  
In wonder at his answers ? — Had he been  
Israel's sole hope, they could not more have graced him.

*Ab.* Was it so marked ?

*Had.* Nay ask ; for others saw it,  
And smiled, and spoke aside. And sure, my lord,  
The son of Bathsheba receives, of late,  
Nicer observance, winged obedience,  
Obsequious homage, (most observable  
In those about the court who love not us,)  
And the old Prophet watches him as close  
As if some evil Spirit lurked to snare  
The precious child of heaven, and heir of Israel.

*Ab.* Would heaven, or hell, or any place but this,  
Contained the basilisk !

*Had.* Ha ! look ! —

*Enter NATHAN.*

— the hoary root of mischief comes. —

Let us retire to safer conference : —

Spies are about us : — stay not to accost him. —

(*Exeunt ABSALOM and HADAD.*)

*Nath.* Why doth that Syrian shun me? Always thus  
He, like a guilty thing, avoids my presence.  
Where'er I find him, — and I find him ever  
Closely conferring, whether in the streets,  
Or gates, or chief resorts, — if I appear,  
His bright, mysterious eye seems conscious of me,  
And soon he vanishes. I touched him once.  
He turned, as he had felt a scorpion; fear  
And loathing glared from his enkindled orbs,  
And paleness overspread his face, like one  
Who smothers mortal pain. Fierce, subtle, dark,  
Designing, and inscrutable, he walks  
Among us like an evil Angel.

(*Passes on.*)

## SCENE II.

*The King's private apartment. King DAVID alone.*

*Enter NATHAN.*

*Nath.* God save the Anointed!

*K. Dav.* Seer, we would thy counsel.

Damascus asks a consort for his heir,  
Our hostage, here, and names the flower of Israel,  
Absalom's daughter. What shall we reply?

*Nath.* Should Israel graft upon a heathen stock?

*K. Dav.* But 't is a noble youth, and near of kin;  
And sure the gentle maiden favors him,

For Absalom himself preferred the suit,  
Who lives in Tamar.

*Nath.* Hearken not, O King.

*K. Dav.* But if the youth conform to Moses, sure,  
His blood and fortunes may aspire so high.  
What nobler line than Hadad's, or what throne  
Of older splendor than Damascus'?

*Nath.* Old, and idolatrous.

*K. Dav.* Her idols fall  
If she be linked with us, and Israel's crown  
Secures a warlike power as her ally.

*Nath.* Rather betroth her to the poorest hind  
That toils in Judah.

*K. Dav.* Prophet of the Lord,  
Seest thou aught more in him than we discern,—  
A young prince modelled in the rarest mould  
Of mind and features? — Ne'er have I beheld,  
Save my son Absalom's, a goodlier form,  
Or mind of brighter lustre.

*Nath.* I have felt  
Strange agitations in his presence, — throes,  
And horrid workings, — like the inward strife  
After dark visions, — when the spectral forms  
That lodge and haunt there, turmoil all my soul. —  
Some mystery — some strange antipathy  
Torments me with abhorrence and distrust. —  
Let not his beauty or his tongue entice thee :  
He hath an eye bright as the morning star,  
But pride, and fiendlike cunning, glance from it,  
And sin is couched in his lascivious smile.

*K. Dav.* If intimations visit thee from Heaven,

We owe obedience, else, as man to man,  
We speak. — His daughter's welfare I would leave  
To Absalom. He hath a mind mature,  
Is politic to judge, and loves the maid  
Even to her rich deservings. They best know  
Their Syrian kinsman, long beneath their roof.

*Nath.* Hath she escaped Syria's foul rites, to yield,  
Even in the precincts of the sanctuary,  
To an uncircumcised, the heart where faith  
Glowed like the burning censer! — O, beware  
Of crafty policy! It wears a face  
Too like ambition. Geshur cleaves to him, —  
League but Damascus — with his power in Israel —  
And Absalom may bend his father's bow.

*K. Dav.* Wrong not my son.

*Nath.* I would not; but I fear  
The sin of Lucifer hath snared his heart! —  
Say why such state attends him? — why he rides  
In a proud chariot drawn by fiery steeds,  
While Israel's monarch sits upon a mule? —  
Why dazzling guards surround him? — Why he still  
Stands in the gates saluting all who pass,  
And greeting in the streets the common people,  
As they were brothers? True humility —

*K. Dav.* You misinterpret venial things —

*Nath.* He doth insult the throne, and take from age,  
And royalty, their reverence.

*K. Dav.* You love him not, and ever strained his faults.

*Nath.* Why are the Chiefs and Princes of the Tribes,  
Who come to solemnize our holy feasts,  
Caressed about his table till they deem

The crown upon his brows ? — Your chiefest men,  
Ancients, and reverend Judges, flock to hear  
His Syrian Parasite sweeten their cups  
With honeyed flattery, and golden hopes,  
And promises of days when Absalom  
Shall make the desert blossom, and the rock  
Drop as the vine and olive.

*K. Dav.* Days like these  
Were welcome, Seer.

*Nath.* You know not what you utter ; —  
Woe to the hour of his anointing ! — King !  
A dreadful vintage shall be trod that day,  
With purple garments ! — Lo ! the noise of arms,  
Chariots, and horsemen, and the shout of Nations,  
Are in my ears ! — the wail of Zion ! — Hark !  
A cry, a cry, comes from her royal towers,  
Of bitter anguish, like a Monarch's voice !  
My Son ! my People ! Woe, alas !

*K. Dav.* Say on, —  
Heaven's will is ours.

*Nath.* 'T is gone —  
It passed me, like a cloud of blood, with sounds  
Confused, like battle.

*K. Dav.* (*after a pause.*) Nought from thy hallowed  
lips  
Falls unrespected. He who changed yon crook  
For Israel's sceptre, may refuse, or grant,  
The same to Absalom. His will be done ! —  
But, Man of God, I harbour no distrust.  
Familiar with the pomp of older kingdoms,  
My son but antedates the day of Israel.

He, ever, loved the ornaments of life,  
Arms and the glistening face of war, and bore  
Himself, from his most tender years, like one  
Conscious of nobleness, born to sustain  
A kingdom's burden.

*Nath.* Son of Jesse, ——

*K. Dav.* What ! hath he not, since fourteen summers  
old,

Served with me in the field, slept in my tent,  
Hungered, and suffered, watched, and toiled with me ;  
Shed his young blood by veteran captains' sides,  
And wielded those bright weapons you dispraise  
Beneath mine eyes, in dire and mutual hazards,  
Like a true son and soldier ?

*Nath.* Son of Jesse, ——

*K. Dav.* (*waving his hand*)

'T is near the hour of sacrifice.

We 'll pause ere we decide the Syrian's suit.

*Nath.* (*making obeisance.*)

Dwell, ever, in the hollow of His hand !

(*Exit NATHAN. King DAVID retires into his  
cloest.*)

### SCENE III.

*The garden of ABSALOM's house on Mount Zion, near  
the palace, overlooking the city. TAMAR sitting by a  
fountain.*

*Tam.* How aromatic evening grows ! The flowers  
And spicy shrubs exhale like onycha ;

Spikenard and henna emulate in sweets.  
Blest hour ! which He, who fashioned it so fair,  
So softly glowing, so contemplative,  
Hath set, and sanctified to look on man.  
And lo ! the smoke of evening sacrifice  
Ascends from out the tabernacle. — Heaven,  
Accept the expiation, and forgive  
This day's offences ! — Ha ! the wonted strain,  
Precursor of his coming ! — Whence can this —  
It seems to flow from some unearthly hand —

*Enter HADAD.*

*Had.* Does beauteous Tamar view, in this clear fount,  
Herself, or heaven ?

*Tam.* Nay, Hadad, tell me whence  
Those sad, mysterious sounds.

*Had.* What sounds, dear Princess ?

*Tam.* Surely, thou know'st ; and now I almost think  
Some spiritual creature waits on thee.

*Had.* I heard no sounds, but such as evening sends  
Up from the city to these quiet shades ;  
A blended murmur sweetly harmonizing  
With flowing fountains, feathered minstrelsy,  
And voices from the hills.

*Tam.* The sounds I mean,  
Floated like mournful music round my head,  
From unseen fingers.

*Had.* When ?

*Tam.* Now, as thou camest.

*Had.* 'T is but thy fancy, wrought  
To ecstasy ; or else thy grandsire's harp  
Resounding from his tower at eventide.



I 've lingered to enjoy its solemn tones,  
Till the broad moon, that rose o'er Olivet,  
Stood listening in the zenith ; yea, have deemed  
Viols and heavenly voices answered him.

*Tam.* But these —

*Had.* Were we in Syria, I might say  
The Naiad of the fount, or some sweet Nymph,  
The goddess of these shades, rejoiced in thee,  
And gave thee salutations ; but I fear  
Judah would call me infidel to Moses.

*Tam.* How like my fancy ! When these strains precede

Thy steps, as oft they do, I love to think  
Some gentle being who delights in us  
Is hovering near, and warns me of thy coming ;  
But they are dirge-like.

*Had.* Youthful fantasy,  
Attuned to sadness, makes them seem so, lady.  
So evening's charming voices, welcomed ever,  
As signs of rest and peace ;— the watchman's call,  
The closing gates, the Levite's mellow trump  
Announcing the returning moon, the pipe  
Of swains, the bleat, the bark, the housing-bell,  
Send melancholy to a drooping soul.

*Tam.* But how delicious are the pensive dreams  
That steal upon the fancy at their call !

*Had.* Delicious to behold the world at rest.  
Meek labor wipes his brow, and intermits  
The curse, to clasp the younglings of his cot ;  
Herdsman and shepherds fold their flocks, — and hark !  
What merry strains they send from Olivet !

The jar of life is still ; the city speaks  
In gentle murmurs ; voices chime with lutes  
Waked in the streets and gardens ; loving pairs  
Eye the red west in one another's arms ;  
And nature, breathing dew and fragrance, yields  
A glimpse of happiness, which He, who formed  
Earth and the stars, had power to make eternal.

*Tam.* Ah ! Hadad, meanest thou to reproach the  
Friend

Who gave so much, because he gave not all ?

*Had.* Perfect benevolence, methinks, had willed  
Unceasing happiness, and peace, and joy ;  
Filled the whole universe of human hearts  
With pleasure, like a flowing spring of life.

*Tam.* Our Prophet teaches so, till man's rebellion.

*Had.* Rebellion ! — Had he leaguered Heaven itself  
With beings powerful, numberless, and dreadful —  
Mixed onset 'midst the lacerating hail,  
And snake-tongued thunderbolts, that hissed and stung  
Worse than eruptive mountains, — this had fallen  
Within the category. — But what did man ? —  
Tasted an apple ! and the fragile scene,  
Eden, and innocence, and human bliss,  
The nectar-flowing streams, life-giving fruits,  
Celestial shades, and amaranthine flowers,  
Vanish ; and sorrow, toil, and pain, and death,  
Cleave to him by an everlasting curse.

*Tam.* Ah ! talk not thus.

*Had.* Is this benevolence ? —

Nay, loveliest, these things sometimes trouble me ;  
For I was tutored in a brighter faith.

Our Syrians deem each lucid fount and stream,  
Forest and mountain, glade and bosky dell,  
Peopled with kind divinities, the friends  
Of man, a spiritual race allied  
To him by many sympathies, who seek  
His happiness, inspire him with gay thoughts,  
Cool with their waves, and fan him with their airs.  
O'er them, the Spirit of the Universe,  
Or Soul of Nature, circumfuses all  
With mild, benevolent, and sun-like radiance ;  
Pervading, warming, vivifying earth,  
As spirit does the body, till green herbs,  
And beauteous flowers, and branchy cedars rise ;  
And shooting stellar influence through her caves,  
Whence minerals and gems imbibe their lustre.

*Tam.* Dreams, Hadad, empty dreams.

*Had.* These Deities

They invoke with cheerful, gentle rites,  
Hang garlands on their altars, heap their shrines  
With Nature's bounties, fruits, and fragrant flowers.  
Not like yon gory mount that ever reeks —

*Tam.* Cast not reproach upon the holy altar.

*Had.* Nay, sweet. — Having enjoyed all pleasures  
here

That Nature prompts, but chiefly blissful love,  
At death, the happy Syrian maiden deems  
Her immaterial flies into the fields,  
Or circumambient clouds, or crystal brooks,  
And dwells, a Deity, with those she worshipped ;  
Till time, or fate, return her in its course  
To quaff, once more, the cup of human joy.

*Tam.* But thou believ'st not this.

*Had.* I almost wish

Thou didst ; for I have feared, my gentle Tamar,  
Thy spirit is too tender for a Law  
Announced in terrors, coupled with the threats  
Of an inflexible and dreadful Being,  
Whose word annihilates, — who could arrest  
The sun in heaven, or, if he pleased, abolish  
Light from creation, and leave wretched man  
To darkness, — as he did to worse, when all  
His firmamental cataracts came down ! —  
*All* perished, — yet his purpose faltered not ! —  
His anger never dies, *never* remits,  
But unextinguished burns to deepest hell.  
Jealous, implacable —

*Tam.* Peace ! impious ! peace !

*Had.* Ha ! says not Moses so ?

The Lord is jealous.

*Tam.* Jealous of our faith,  
Our love, our true obedience, justly his ;  
And a poor recompense for all his favors.  
Implacable he is not ; contrite man,  
Ne'er found him so.

*Had.* But others have,  
If oracles be true.

*Tam.* Little we know  
Of them ; and nothing of their dire offence.

*Had.* I meant not to displease, love ; but my soul  
Revolts, because I think thy gentle nature  
Shudders at him and yonder bloody rites.  
How dreadful ! when the world awakes to light,

And life, and gladness, and the jocund tide  
Bounds in the veins of every happy creature,  
Morning is ushered by a murdered victim,  
Whose wasting members reek upon the air,  
Polluting the pure firmament; the shades  
Of evening scent of death; almost, the shrine  
Itself, o'ershadowed by the Cherubim;  
And where the clotted current from the altar  
Mixes with Kedron, all its waves are gore.  
Nay, nay, I grieve thee; — 't is not for myself,  
But that I fear these gloomy things oppress  
Thy soul, and cloud its native sunshine.

*Tam. (in tears, clasping her hands.)*

Witness, ye Heavens! Eternal Father, witness!  
Blest God of Jacob! Maker! Friend! Preserver!  
That with my heart, my undivided soul,  
I love, adore, and praise thy glorious name,  
Confess thee Lord of all, believe thy Laws  
Wise, just, and merciful, as they are true.  
O, Hadad, Hadad! you misconstrue much  
The sadness that usurps me; — 't is for thee  
I grieve, — for hopes that fade, — for your lost soul,  
And my lost happiness.

*Had.* O, say not so,  
Beloved Princess. Why distrust my faith?

*Tam.* Thou know'st, alas, my weakness; but remember,  
I never, never will be thine, although  
The feast, the blessing, and the song were past,  
Though Absalom and David called me bride,  
Till sure thou own'st, with truth, and love sincere  
The Lord Jehovah.

*Had.* Leave me not — Hear, hear —  
I do believe — I know that Being lives  
Whom you adore. Ah! stay — by *proofs* I know  
Which Moses had not.

*Tam.* Prince, unclasp my hand.

(*Exit.*)

*Had.* Untwine thy fetters if thou canst. — How sweet  
To watch the struggling softness! It allays  
The beating tempest of my thoughts, and flows,  
Like the nepenthe of Elysium through me.  
How exquisite! Like subtlest essences,  
She fills the spirit! How the girdle clips  
Her taper waist with its resplendent clasp!  
Her bosom's silvery-swelling network yields  
Ravishing glimpses, like sweet shade and moonshine  
Checkering Astarte's statue —

*Enter a Slave.*

*Slave.* One in haste  
Inquires for you, my lord.

*Had.* I come.

(*Exeunt.*)

## ACT II.

SCENE I. *An apartment in ABSALOM's house. ABSALOM and HADAD in discourse.*

*Ab.* But you still speak as if a heavy doubt  
Burthened your tongue. Be plain. Think you his love  
Exceeds a parent's charter?

*Had.* Troth, my lord,  
I scarce know how to answer. All my hopes  
Are so ingraft to yours, that I may see  
With jealous eyes. What casts a shade o'er you,  
Leaves me in darkness palpable; for I,  
With lineal honors, may a jewel lose  
Far dearer than Damascus' diadem.

*Ab.* Think you—I say—the aim of his fond dotage  
Transcends the sacred limits of my rights?

*Had.* Why, then, my lord, I must confess, this flux  
Of zeal, and duty, and officious homage,  
Observable of late, enforces me  
To think some ears about the Prince have caught  
What else I had believed an envious fable.

*Ab.* What fable?

*Had.* Such I held it, and, as such,  
My duty bade me keep it. Curse the tongue  
Whence slanderous rumor, like the adder-drop,  
Distils her venom, withering friendship's faith,  
Turning love's favor ——

*Ab.* On, on.

*Had.* My lord, a whisper steals about the city,  
Not widely known, or current for a truth,  
But credited by some, — that, wrought upon  
By Joab and the Seer, the King has named  
The royal heir.

*Ab.* Ha! — and I not know it?

*Had.* Twice in the gates, and thrice upon the walls,  
Was I saluted yesterday, and asked  
If my lord Absalom had heard the rumor.  
'T is said, to make the choice irrevocable,  
Young Solomon has received, by Nathan's hand,  
The private unction.

*Ab.* Vengeance! — What! anoint him! —  
Trumpet to all mankind the damned deed  
That scandals his gray hairs, and robs his life  
Of half its lustre!

*Had.* O, my lord, that 's past;  
And Time, sin's varnisher, hath done his office.

*Ab.* Good heaven! his very angel hides his face,  
Even at the name of Bathsheba —

*Had.* But mark: —  
'T is but a rumor, we may hope unfounded:  
Though ephod-wearers stroke their beards and smile.

*Ab.* Founded or false, it wears a treasonous face,  
And looks defiance. Mitred heads, beware!  
And younger brothers! — Death! ere Absalom  
Tamely behold the lineal ornament  
Plucked from his crest, — Jerusalem shall quake!

(*Paces to and fro in agitation, then suddenly stops.*)  
If I have forfeited my birthright, name  
The action! — Name the hardship, name the hazard,



That I have shrunk from in the public cause! —  
Expound me — show me — on what plea, pretext,  
Precedent, yonder harlot's stripling dares  
Aspire before the Son of Queens, who girt  
His harness in the field ere he was born.

*Had.* Let Joab answer.

*Ab.* Were there in 't  
A face of justice — But to see my rights  
Slighted and trampled by a stabbing ruffian,  
A father's favor poisoned by the breath  
Of an old visionary; be left blank,  
Because I scorn to flatter, and protest  
My loyalty for favor, strips me bare  
Of patience; and I swear, ere brook such wrong,  
I'll give their chronicles a bloodier leaf  
Than Amnon's.

*Had.* Pause not. Snatch the prize  
From brows that totter with the mighty burthen.

*Ab.* (*with surprise.*) Kinsman! —  
I threat usurpers.

*Had.* Frown not, nor be amazed  
That I outstrip you. Hadad's every hope,  
Life, royalty, and liberty, and love,  
Depend on Absalom. Who knows how soon  
Those precious counsellors, who hide the beams  
Of royal grace from you, may stigmatize  
Damascus as a dangerous neighbour; hint  
That I am turbulent, and apt for war,  
And may, hereafter, shake the peace of Judah;  
Suggest a dungeon safer than a throne,  
While Pharpar's lovely vale might bloom as fair

Beneath his Adonijah's sceptre? Else,  
Why am I held assurance for the faith  
Which Syria never broke? — never, my lord, —  
Those levies which gave umbrage were to check  
The insolence of Bosra. Not an hour  
Stand I assured of life or liberty,  
Till Israel's crown empale my kinsman's head. ——  
Assents he to the alliance, which would rest  
The pledge of amity? — If his intents  
Be fair, why hesitate? — Can policy  
Devise a surer bond to knit the kingdoms?

*Ab.* No matter, — King or no King's leave, — she 's  
thine.

*Had.* I 'm grappled to your fortunes. But, my lord,  
Is not the bond 'twixt child and parent charged  
With mutual duties? If my father stint  
His love, neglect my nurture, cast me off,  
Or give my lawful portion to another,  
Am I his debtor still, in reverence, love,  
Obedience? or 's the obligation cancelled?

*Ab.* Enough, — I 'll sift, I 'll sift it.

*Had.* Might we not  
Extract it from the boy?

*Ab.* Thou hast a tongue  
That strikes like music; thou mightst charm his heart  
To drop its secret.

*Had.* But how to meet? — The Prophet guards his  
steps  
Close as his shadow.

*Ab.* Oft, of late, I see him  
Walking the Paradise and neighbouring orchards,

With studious looks, among the plants and flowers,  
With but a slave : there you may meet him daily.

*Had.* Perhaps Mephibosheth might lend us light :  
He watches all things with a dragon's eye.

*Ab.* Assail him.

*Had.* Promises may make him speak ; —  
But golden ones.

*Ab.* Nay, promise what you must.

*Had.* And you be ignorant, my lord, — that 's best.  
He carries strength ; for Benjamin would cleave  
To any cause that served the House of Saul.

*Ab.* Go now in search of them. Bid, as you pass,  
Aithophel attend me.

*Had.* Yes, my lord.

(*Exit.*)

*Ab.* Can it be ? —

Can he still bend on me those eyes, whose beams  
Of grace and glory I have coveted  
As Heaven, and sought by noblest acts to win.  
Still can he greet me with that brow of love,  
Radiant as Moses', yet in secret stab ?  
Stab where he knows 't will rankle to the death ? —  
If this be so, what need I care for aught ? —  
I never in my proudest thought aspired  
To his soul's grandeur. Death it is to think  
How villanous counsels warp the noble mind  
From nature's bias ! — Cursed be his misleaders ! —  
The crown is mine, — by birth, by purchase mine, —  
And who shall rob me of my glorious right ? —

(*Exit.*)

## SCENE II.

*The King's Paradise, without the walls. HADAD  
pacing up and down one of the walks. He stops  
as he fronts the city.*

*Had.* 'T is so ; — the hoary Harper sings aright :  
How beautiful is Zion ! — Like a queen,  
Armed with a helm in virgin loveliness,  
Her heaving bosom in a bossy cuirass,  
She sits aloft, begirt with battlements  
And bulwarks swelling from the rock, to guard  
The sacred courts, pavilions, palaces,  
Soft gleaming through the umbrage of the woods  
That tuft her summit, and, like raven tresses,  
Wave their dark beauty round the Tower of David.  
Resplendent with a thousand golden bucklers,  
The embrazures of alabaster shine ;  
Hailed by the pilgrims of the desert, bound  
To Judah's mart with Orient merchandise. —  
But not, for thou art fair and turret-crowned,  
Wet with the choicest dew of heaven, and blessed  
With golden fruits, and gales of frankincense,  
Dwell I beneath thine ample curtains. Here,  
Where Saints and Seers denounce, — where the stern  
Law  
Incessant thunders, — where chief Angels watch,  
And where the Glory hovers, — one sweet voice  
More fills mine ear, one neck of snow more awes me !  
Ha ! hold — the object of my search approaches —

Now, if the tale be truth — or forged, more like,  
By dark Ahithophel (<sup>1</sup>) — all 's one ! — Ambition  
Seethes in his bosom, like the Asphaltic caves,  
Whose black and bitter substance, boiling up,  
A spark will kindle. — This young minion's eye,  
Thick clustering auburn curls, and sanguine cheek,  
Reveal the destined worshipper of beauty.

*Enter SOLOMON, attended by two Slaves.*

Good morrow, little Prince.

*Sol.* Health to you, Sir.

*Had.* What fragrant flowers are those you carry ?

*Sol.* Buds

Of Median myrtle, mandrake flowers, and camphire.

*Had.* (*scenting them.*) They 're passing sweet. —  
What dark-eyed favorite didst thou pluck them for ?

*Sol.* For no one.

*Had.* Ha, methinks they 'd rarely grace  
A lily bosom : many an one would pant,  
At such a token from a gallant Prince.

*Sol.* I plucked them for my herbal.

*Had.* Grace defend me,  
Ere I had reached your age, I held sweet flowers  
Created for no end but to adorn  
Young damsels, whose dark locks I loved to braid,  
And twine with rosy wreaths, and prank their bosoms.  
Intended for the throne, as you are, Prince,  
The loveliest virgins in my uncle's court  
Caressed me secretly with amorous gifts,  
And smiled at favors which I ravished from them.  
Should you not like a sweet young loving maid  
To toy with, and present with knots of flowers ?

*Sol.* No.

*Had.* But why ? it were a harmless pleasure.

*Sol.* Because I would not waste my prime in dalliance.  
The thrifty proverb bids us plant, in youth,  
To blossom in our manhood, and bear fruit,  
When we are old. Besides, 't is said by those  
Most like to know, 't is not for Princes' sons  
To follow wantons, or to love spiced drinks.

*Had.* Kings are meant there, or sons of Kings, at least.  
On whom the government will rest ; — but that,  
Perchance, will be your lot ?

*Sol.* Perchance.

*Had.* Nay, more,  
'T is said the King has named you to the throne ?

*Sol.* Things, oft, are said.

*Had.* (*after a pause.*)

But tell me truly, if a beauteous damsel,  
Like those young delicates about your mother,  
With skin like ermine, cheeks like wind-flowers, hair  
Like aragamen, eyes like the gazelle,  
Her lips a braid of scarlet —

*Sol.* Or like my cousin Tamar.

*Had.* Is she so tempting fair ?

*Sol.* So Hadad thinks.

*Had.* Who told you that, my little Prince ?

*Sol.* Your eyes.

*Had.* Speak they so plain ?

*Sol.* Not speak ; they burn.

For when you gaze upon her beauteous face,  
I see them kindle like the ruddy lamps  
That flame within the tabernacle.

*Had.* Well,

Do not all eyes the same, whene'er they gaze  
On beauteous woman, Nature's masterpiece ?

*Sol.* No, not like yours.

*Had.* Hold, here 's a box of perfume,  
Sent to the King mine uncle from the East,  
From far Serendib. Smell it, Prince.

*Sol.* 'T is rare. —

It glides like magic through me. — Nay, I prithee,  
Give 't me again.

*Had.* (*aside.*) It works. — Behold the lid.

*Sol.* Ye powers ! what matchless youth and maid are  
there ?

*Had.* Venus and Tammuz.

*Sol.* Never did my eyes  
Behold a sight so lovely.

*Had.* Wouldst thou know  
Their story ?

*Sol.* Troth, I would.

*Had.* Then sit we here  
Beneath this spreading terebinth. And first,  
As you 've been straitly watched, and kept so long  
In ignorance of things a Prince should know,  
I 'll tell you by what chance, ere I had reached  
Your comely stature, I grew wiser.

*Sol.* Do.

*Had.* Behind my uncle's palace spreads a park,  
With lawns, and glades, sunned plats, and darksome  
woods,  
Through which cool Abana, clear as this fount,  
Winds gently past delightful arbours, shades,

And green retirements from the noontide heat.  
There, in a solitary nook, o'erhung  
With trees of ancient beauty, where the stream  
Had scooped a little basin, fringed with flowers  
Even to the brim, and screened from observation  
By blossomed boughs, and aromatic shrubs  
Clustering impervious —

*Sol.* Like the very bank  
Where these sweet lovers lie.

*Had.* Much like it, Prince.  
There had I stolen, one day, from my attendants,  
And lay along beneath a tuft of henna,  
Watching the idle water. Soon, I heard  
The sound of voices, soft, and silver sweet,  
Approaching in the wood. I kept me still. —  
Anon, two heavenly damsels of the Queen's  
Entered the little arbour, and sat down  
Full in my view and hearing. One was white  
As the young lily, with luxuriant braids  
Of ebony ; the other's blooming cheek,  
Like the pomegranate, blushed through locks of gold.  
Awhile they talked and laughed, (love all their theme,)  
With merry eyes, and bright carnation lips,  
Which deepened as they told their amorous stories.  
At last, the dark-haired maid proposed to lave  
Their limbs and glowing breasts in Abana,  
Unsandalled her fair foot, undid the clasps,  
And drew the jewelled buskin from a leg  
Of ivory, to try the water's —

*Enter NATHAN, from a walk near them.*

— Ha ! Prince,

The box !



*Sol. (running to NATHAN.)*

Look, father, what a beauteous pair !  
And smell the perfume Hadad gave to me :  
'T is sweeter than the richest aloes.

*(The Prophet examines the perfume ; then dashes it on the ground.)*

*Nath. (approaching HADAD sternly.)*

Who, what art thou, foul poisoner ? — that durst  
Abuse with forms and philters this young prince ? —  
Who art thou ? — Is it for the love of sin ? —  
Or art thou leagued, for some infernal purpose,  
Against the House of David ? — Answer, Devil !  
Who art thou ?

*Had. (pale and agitated.)*

One unused to terms like these,  
And will requite them, reverend man of God.

*Nath.* Glare not upon me with those fiendlike eyes,  
Thou haggard, guilt-confounded wretch. — I curse  
thee —

I curse thee, and defy thee, — in Heaven's name !  
Come, boy.

*(Exit with SOLOMON.)*

*Had. (gnashing his teeth.)* Would Hell's eternal  
fire were round thee ! Hell's  
Undying viper gnawing at thy heart ! —

*(Pacing violently backwards and forwards,  
checks himself, as fearful of being observed.)*

Whence — wherefore — this detested flesh can front  
Worst death, yet quails before a tottering bald-head —  
Whence could he come, with such a thief-like step ? —  
Cursed clods ! too dull for aught but thunder — Ha !

*Enter ABSALOM, at a distance.*

He comes to know our conference — 'T is well —  
Gloom and resentment in his mien. He seems  
Prepared for darker searching. — When he shakes  
Those ominous locks, I know the clime within,  
As the wind's temper by the lashing woods.

*Ab.* What! hast thou seen him?

*Had.* Yes, my lord.

*Ab.* What said

The cockatrice?

*Had.* Wary and shrewd he seems,  
And shunned my questions; lessoned well, no doubt.  
Ere I had fully proved him, Nathan broke  
Imperiously upon us, and, with threats,  
Dragged him away.

*Ab.* I'll know, if Hell be moved  
To answer.

*Had.* Have you seen Ahithophel?

*Ab.* He smooths it o'er, but shakes his head, and  
looks

More than he dares confess.

*Had.* What! will not speak?

*Ab.* Not plainly, but believes, or doubts, at least;  
But I must be resolved. The howling damned  
Know not my suffering, for they know their doom,  
And steel them to endurance. Thus to live,  
With hate and love, revolt and reverence,  
Fighting like hungry vultures for my heart,  
I cannot, will not, long.

*Had.* Now would to grace  
Some way — some thought —

*Ab.* Hast seen Mephibosheth ?

*Had.* My lord — (*Pauses as in reflection.*)

*Ab.* What is 't ? — Declare thy mind.

*Had.* I almost fear — but, were I Israel's Prince,  
I knew my counsel.

*Ab.* Palter not.

*Had.* My lord,  
A wondrous man is in Jerusalem,  
Arrived three nights ago from Babylon,  
Bound into Egypt to consult the Sages  
Touching events foretold the Assyrian King.  
He draws his lineage and his power from one  
Named in your Chronicles, who prophesied  
The Star from Jacob, and who trebly blessed  
The conquering people whom the Lords of Moab  
Called him to curse, — the potent sage of Pethor, \*  
Chief of the ancient Magi. None has since  
Equalled his power or piercing eye, till now ;  
But this far-seeing Mage, 't is said, has viewed  
Earth's consummation, and declared what shall be  
When the last star expires.

*Ab.* What, Balaam-Haddon ?

*Had.* He 's here ; but keeps himself from public  
view.

A Syrian who had known him, like myself,  
In Babylon, observed his caravan  
Enter an obscure court. I went, and saw. —  
The awful front, and eye oracular  
Were his indeed. I would consult him, Prince.

\* Balaam.

*Ab. (after a brief pause.)*

But such an act might blast me. Were it known,  
*Idolatry!* would ring from Dan to Besor.

*Had.* Thence, I was doubtful to propose the step;  
Not that I held you awed by Moses' threats.\*

But could not I obtain the intelligence  
Without your motion?

*Ab.* That, indeed, —

*Had.* I burn  
To know another thing, more near to you  
Than me, which this great Magian could resolve.

*Ab.* What 's that?

*Had.* What Spirit 't is that serves your father.

*Ab.* Spirit!

*Had.* Many suppose he holds some God, or Demon,  
Bond-servant to his throne, who works his will,  
And hath assisted all his mighty deeds.

*Ab.* This is believed?

*Had.* Many believe it here,  
And 't is the current faith of neighbouring Kings.  
No marvel it has missed your ear, my lord,  
For you pay outward reverence to the Law,  
And are his son. Nor is it strange, methinks,  
Nor passing reason. Look at his broad realm,  
Stretched from Euphrates to the Western Sea,  
From Elath to Orontes. Where is Edom?  
Philistia? Ammon? Where the Syrian thrones,  
Coëval with the world? Who smote the Chaldee?

\* "The soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, — I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people." — *LEVIT. xx. 6.*

Broke Elam's bow ? and taught the Desert hordes  
To shun his dangerous frontier ? Who hath scaped  
Perils unnumbered ; hunted, like a wolf,  
From den to den by King and people ? Who,  
In fourscore stricken battles, bathed his sword  
In bloodiest conflict, yet sustains no scar ?  
Who, weaponless, o'erthrew the Giant ? Who  
Hath piled the gold and jewels till his vaults  
Resemble spirit-mines ? Who plucks the trunks  
Of Lebanon, and bids them arch his roofs,  
Or heaps them in the vale like reeds ? Who takes  
The spirit captive with his strings, or sweeps  
His kinnor till the dizzy soul ascends,  
As in a trance of ecstasy ? My lord,  
Who hath done more than these ? in war, in peace,  
The minion of the time, excelling all  
The Kings of earth, as yonder radiant sun  
The inferior orbs of heaven ? — A shepherd-boy.

*Ab.* True, Hadad, and it irks my inmost soul  
To break my faith with such a father. Were  
He less, my sin would be so.

*Had.* If he wronged me,  
Though brighter than the fabled Seraphim, —  
Were he the God I worshipped, — I 'd fall off.

*Ab.* Misery attends me either way.

*Had.* My lord,  
Think o'er the history of his birth, whom foes  
Would foist above you ; imp of an adulteress !  
Remember brave Uriah bearing back  
His doom, to leave the beauteous harlot free !  
Had this been, if the Lord protects his fortunes ?

Or such a guilt-avenging Being live ?  
No, — I would learn by what presiding Genius  
He works his wonders ; — how subjected first ; —  
Whether attracted by his minstrelsy ; —  
Or by some power residing in his star ; —  
Or how ; for various are the ways to win  
Ascendency o'er Spirits ; — and this power  
We *know* is his ; for, while a beardless stripling,  
His skill expelled a demon from his master.  
Perhaps, my lord, power strong enough exists,  
To break the pact, and lure him to your service.

*Ab.* Well, — see the Mage : prove if his visioned eye  
Can tell us what hath chanced. I 've deeper reason  
Than you suspect, to prize their star-taught lore.  
Pray him to cast our horoscopes, both mine,  
And his, we fear ; as for the rest, inquire  
Or leave it, as you will. Thou hast not yet  
Sounded Mephibosheth ?

*Had.* Not yet, my lord.

*Ab.* Then do not, till we know the present issue.

(*Exeunt.*)

### SCENE III.

*The house of OBIL. OBIL and MALCUTH. A knocking.*

*Obil.* Woman, who knocks there ?

*Mal.* (*looking through the lattice.*)

The crook-back Maugrabin.

*Obil.* Ha ! open, Malcuth, open.

*Mal.* Do 't thyself.

The elvish slave shall knock till doom, ere I  
Unsheathe a bolt.

*Obil.* Peace, shrew. (*Opens the door.*)

*Enter MAUGRABIN.*

*Mal.* Spawn of the Nile,  
What seekest thou with us ?

*Maug.* Thy fair company. —

Here, Obil, take this casket, — guard it safely, —  
There 's more in 't than would purchase all your tribe,  
Nay, every hoof that roams upon the desert.  
Trust it to no hand but your master's.

*Obil.* Whose ? — the King's ?

*Maug.* Forsooth ! thou feed'st his dromedaries,  
And he feeds thee. But is it on his gold  
Thou found'st the hope to see thy lovely sands  
Once more, and view, at ease, from thy broad tent  
Camels, and asses, flocks, and herds, and slaves  
About thee like the Patriarch ? Call *him*  
Thy lord, who makes thee lord o'er others. No ; —  
Thy master Hadad.

*Obil.* I 'll obey.

*Maug.* (*to MALCUTH.*) Farewell, sweet leopardess.

(*Signs to OBIL, who lays the casket on the table,  
and follows him out.*)

*Mal.* They 're whispering ; —

Now, by our mother Hagar, but I 'll see  
What wondrous treasure — Lying knave ! (*Opening  
the casket.*)

'T is nothing but a monstrous key, — enchased  
As for some royal sepulchre — Ha ! how ? —  
It will not close — and Maugrabin's returning.

(*Throws it down, and exit.*)

## SCENE IV.

*The terraced roof of ABSALOM'S house, by night ;  
adorned with vases of flowers, and fragrant shrubs :  
an awning spread over part of it. TAMAR and HADAD.*

*Tam.* No, no, I well remember — proofs, you said,  
*Unknown* to Moses.

*Had.* Well, my love, thou know'st  
I 've been a traveller in various climes ;  
Trode Ethiopia's scorching sands, and scaled  
The snow-clad mountains ; trusted to the deep ;  
Traversed the fragrant islands of the sea,  
And with the Wise conversed of many nations.

*Tam.* I know thou hast.

*Had.* Of all mine eyes have seen,  
The greatest, wisest, and most wonderful,  
Is that dread sage, the Ancient of the Mountain.

*Tam.* Who ?

*Had.* None knows his lineage, age, or name : his  
locks

Are like the snows of Caucasus ; his eyes  
Beam with the wisdom of collected ages.  
In green, unbroken years, he sees, 't is said,  
The generations pass, like autumn fruits,  
Garnered, consumed, and springing fresh to life,  
Again to perish, while he views the sun,  
The seasons roll, in rapt serenity,  
And high communion with celestial powers.  
Some say 't is Shem, our father, some say Enoch,  
And some Melchisideck.



*Tam.* I 've heard a tale  
Like this, but ne'er believed it.

*Had.* I have proved it. —  
Through perils dire, dangers most imminent,  
Seven days and nights 'midst rocks and wildernesses,  
And boreal snows, and never-thawing ice,  
Where not a bird, a beast, a living thing,  
Save the far-soaring vulture comes, I dared  
My desperate way, resolved to know, or perish.

*Tam.* Rash, rash adventurer!

*Had.* On the highest peak  
Of stormy Caucasus, there blooms a spot  
On which perpetual sunbeams play, where flowers  
And verdure never die; and there he dwells.

*Tam.* But didst thou see him?

*Had.* Never did I view  
Such awful majesty: his reverend locks  
Hung like a silver mantle to his feet,  
His raiment glistened saintly white, his brow  
Rose like the gate of Paradise, his mouth  
Was musical as its bright guardians' songs.

*Tam.* What did he tell thee? O! what wisdom fell  
From lips so hallowed?

*Had.* Whether he possess  
The Tetragrammaton, — the powerful Name  
Inscribed on Moses' rod, by which he wrought  
Unheard of wonders, which constrains the Heavens  
To part with blessings, shakes the earth, and rules  
The strongest Spirits; or if God hath given  
A delegated power, I cannot tell.  
But 't was from him I learned their fate, their fall,

Who, erewhile, wore resplendent crowns in Heaven ;  
Now, scattered through the earth, the air, the sea.  
Them he compels to answer, and from them  
Has drawn what Moses, nor no mortal ear,  
Has ever heard.

*Tam.* But did he tell it thee ?

*Had.* He told me much, — more than I dare reveal ;  
For with a dreadful oath he sealed my lips.

*Tam.* But canst thou tell me nothing ? — Why unfold  
So much, if I must hear no more ?

*Had.* You bade  
Explain my words, almost reproached me, sweet,  
For what by accident escaped me.

*Tam.* Ah !  
A little — something tell me, — sure, not all  
Were words inhibited.

*Had.* Then, promise never,  
Never to utter of this conference  
A breath to mortal.

*Tam.* Solemnly I vow.

*Had.* Even then, 't is little I can say, compared  
With all the marvels he related.

*Tam.* Come,  
I 'm breathless. — Tell me how they sinned, how fell.

*Had.* Their Prince involved them in his ruin.

*Tam.* What black offence on his devoted head  
Drew such dire punishment ?

*Had.* The wish to be  
As the All-Perfect.

*Tam.* Arrogating that  
Peculiar to his Maker ! — awful crime !  
But what their doom ? their place of punishment ?

*Had.* Above, about, beneath ; earth, sea, and air ;  
Their habitations various as their minds,  
Employments, and desires. (²)

*Tam.* But are they round us, Hadad ? — not confined  
In penal chains and darkness ?

*Had.* So he said ;  
And so your holy books infer. What saith  
Your Prophet ? what the Prince of Uz ?

*Tam.* I shudder,  
Lest some dark Minister be near us now.

*Had.* You wrong them. They are bright Intelligences,  
Robbed of some native splendor, and cast down,  
'T is true, from Heaven ; but not deformed, and foul,  
Revengeful, malice-working Fiends, as fools  
Suppose. They dwell, like Princes, in the clouds ;  
Sun their bright pinions in the middle sky ;  
Or arch their palaces beneath the hills,  
With stones inestimable studded so,  
That sun or stars were useless there.

*Tam.* Good heavens !

*Had.* He bade me look on rugged Caucasus,  
Crag piled on crag beyond the utmost ken,  
Naked, and wild, as if creation's ruins  
Were heaped in one immeasurable chain  
Of barren mountains, beaten by the storms  
Of everlasting winter. But within  
Are glorious palaces, and domes of light,  
Irradiate halls, and crystal colonnades,  
Blazing with lustre past the noontide beam,  
Or, with a milder beauty, mimicking  
The mystic signs of changeful Mazzaroth.

*Tam.* Unheard of wonders !

*Had.* There they dwell, and muse,  
And wander ; Beings beautiful, immortal,  
Minds vast as heaven, capacious as the sky ;  
Whose thoughts connect past, present, and to come,  
And glow with light intense, imperishable.  
So in the sparry chambers of the Sea  
And Air-Pavilions, upper Tabernacles,  
They study Nature's secrets, and enjoy  
No poor dominion.

*Tam.* Are they beautiful,  
And powerful far beyond the human race ?

*Had.* Man's feeble heart cannot conceive it. When  
The Sage described them, fiery eloquence  
Broke from his lips, his bosom heaved, his eyes  
Grew bright and mystical ; moved by the theme,  
Like one who feels a deity within.

*Tam.* Wondrous ! — What intercourse have they with  
men ?

*Had.* Sometimes they deign to intermix with man,  
But oft with woman.

*Tam.* Ha ! with woman ?

*Had.* She  
Attracts them with her gentler virtues, soft,  
And beautiful, and heavenly, like themselves.  
They have been known to love her with a passion  
Stronger than human.

*Tam.* That surpasses all  
You yet have told me.

*Had.* This the Sage affirms ;  
And Moses, darkly.

*Tam.* How do they appear? — How love? —

*Had.* Sometimes 't is spiritual, signified  
By beatific dreams, or more distinct  
And glorious apparition. — They *have* stooped  
To animate a human form, and love  
Like mortals.

*Tam.* Frightful to be so beloved! —  
Frightful! who could endure the horrid thought?

*Had.* (*after a pause.*) But why condemn a Spirit's  
love? so high,  
So glorious, if he haply deigned? —

*Tam.* Forswear  
My Maker! love a Demon!

*Had.* No — O, no, —  
My thoughts but wandered — Oft, alas! they wander.

*Tam.* Why dost thou speak so sadly now? — And lo!  
Thine eyes are fixed again upon Arcturus.  
Thus ever, when thy drooping spirits ebb,  
Thou gazest on that star. Hath it the power  
To cause or cure thy melancholy mood? —

(*He appears lost in thought.*)

Tell me, — ascrib'st thou influence to the stars?

*Had.* (*starting.*) The stars! — What know'st thou  
of the stars?

*Tam.* I know that they were made to rule the night.

*Had.* Like palace lamps! Thou echoest well thy  
grandsire! —

Woman! The stars are living, glorious,  
Amazing, infinite! —

*Tam.* Speak not so wildly. —  
I know them numberless, resplendent, set

As symbols of the countless, countless years  
That make eternity.

*Had.* Thou speak'st the word ——

O, had ye proved — like those Great Sufferers, —  
Shot, once for all, the gulf, — felt myriad ages  
Only the prelude, — could ye scan the void  
With eyes as searching as its torments, ——  
Then — then — mightst thou pronounce it feelingly !

*Tam.* What ails thee, Hadad ? — Draw me not so  
close

*Had.* Tamar ! I need thy love — more than thy love —

*Tam.* Thy cheek is wet with tears — Nay, let us  
part —

'T is late — I cannot, must not linger. —

*(Breaks from him, and exit.)*

*Had.* Loved and abhorred ! — Still, still accursed ! —

*(He paces, twice or thrice, up and down, with  
passionate gestures ; then turns his face to  
the sky, and stands a moment in silence.)*

— O ! where,

In the illimitable space, in what  
Profound of untried misery, when all  
His worlds, his rolling orbs of light, that fill  
With life and beauty yonder infinite,  
Their radiant journey run, for ever set,  
Where, where, in what abyss shall I be groaning ?  
*(Exit.)*

## ACT III.

SCENE I. *The inner apartment of DAVID's sepulchre, filled with treasure: a sarcophagus of Egyptian porphyry standing in the centre. Enter ABSALOM, HADAD, and BALAAM-HADDON, as from another chamber of the tomb. BALAAM-HADDON carries a lamp, and a silver vessel for the burning of perfume.*

*B. Hadd.* Behold, my lord, the last and richest! Here,  
Nothing but gold of Ophir, pearls, and gems  
Of priceless value. How they catch the lamp beams,  
And sparkle as I wave it, like the stars  
Upon a fitful night of clouds. And lo!  
The marble in whose womb he means to sleep.

*Ab.* It strikes me dumb — what heaps, what mountain piles!

The pillage of the world were scarce enough  
To sum the riches we have gazed upon.

*Had.* But whence can he have drawn them? there's  
the question.

He has pulled down, indeed, some barbarous thrones,  
Made Syria tributary, and brought home  
Rich spoil; but in the chambers of this rock <sup>(3)</sup>  
Are treasures which the empires of the earth,  
United, cannot equal. Whence they come  
I'm bent to know. His flocks, and herds, and tilth,  
Vineyards, and olive-grounds, and all he draws  
Of yearly revenue from all the tribes,

From Elath, and the Eastern caravans,  
Shrink to an alms.

*Ab.* I know not what to think.

The Mage must answer.

*Had.* Balaam-Haddon, speak.

*B. Hadd.* If there be power in incantations, spells,  
Or potency in stars, or strongest magic,  
Or compounds such as these, some one shall answer.

*(Places the vessel on the further part of the  
sarcophagus, heaps drugs upon it, and kindles  
them by the lamp.)*

Stand by me here, my lords : — observe, but speak not.

*(A thick smoke rises, which envelopes the remoter  
part of the tomb : ABSALOM and HADAD  
stand with their eyes intently fixed upon it :  
BALAAM-HADDON mutters an incantation, casting,  
from time to time, perfumes upon the  
flame. A form becomes dimly visible amidst  
the smoke ; its eyes and countenance sparkling.  
ABSALOM continues silently gazing. BALAAM-  
HADDON turns to him.)*

Address your questions briefly ; when the smoke  
Decays, it vanishes.

*Ab.* What — who — art thou ?

*Spirit.* The Genius of the Throne.

*Ab.* Servest thou the King ?

*Spirit.* I serve the Throne, and him who sits thereon.

*Ab.* Implying thou mightst serve his son ?

*Spirit.* If he

Were chief in Jewry.

*Ab.* Canst thou make him so ?



*Spirit.* No, nor oppose : I have no present power  
Upon the blood of David.

*Had.* Prince, mark that !

*Ab.* Canst thou foresee ? — Know'st thou the past ?

*Spirit.* Dim shadows of the future lie before me,  
Like forms in twilight : all things past I know.

*Ab.* Then answer, I adjure thee ; for to this  
Wert thou evoked. — Is Solomon elect  
To David's throne ? — Has he received the unction ?

*Spirit.* The kingly oil hath flowed upon his locks.

*Had.* Change not, my lord. — What boots a horn of  
oil

Against that sword, that military arm,  
Thy power in Israel ?

*Ab.* And now I care not — Heaven or Hell to aid,  
I 'll prove the issue. — Spirit, art thou bound  
By ties indissoluble to the King ?

*Spirit.* I serve the Throne, till thrice three times  
revolve.

*Ab.* Three times —

*B. Hadd.* So Spirits reckon ; he will not reveal. —  
Who bound thee ?

*Spirit.* Jesse's son.

*B. Hadd.* Serv'st thou in love ?

*Spirit.* No ; for he hath not kept his covenant.

*Ab.* But shall the son of Bathsheba be King ?

*Spirit.* He may be, or may not.

*Ab.* How know'st thou that ?

*Spirit.* I read it in thy horoscope.

*Ab.* Know'st thou  
My destiny ?

*Spirit.* I know what may be.

*Ab.* Speak, —

Reveal, — I do beseech thee, mighty Power,  
How I may hold my lawful birthright.

*B. Hadd.* Speak.

*Spirit.* What said the Chaldee, whom thou saw'st at  
Geshur?

*Ab.* Ha!

*Spirit.* What answer brought he from the palace  
tower

Of Talmai, on the night of Pentecost?

*Ab.* The holy Gods!

*Spirit.* A hostile Planet, near allied to thee,  
Threatens eclipse and blood; o'ercome but that,  
And length of days, and glory shall be thine.  
That powerful Star is Solomon's, and rides  
Hard by the ascendant.

*Ab.* But hath not yet attained it?

*Spirit.* It enters on the seventh of Tisri.

*Ab.* Gods!

*Had.* So near?

*Ab.* Direct me. How can I o'ercome?

*Spirit.* Possess the crown ere Tisri.

*Ab.* Shall I, then,  
Be fortunate?

*Spirit.* Beyond thy father, or the happiest mortal.

*Ab.* And thou wilt serve me?

*Spirit.* As I now do him.

*B. Hadd.* Reveal the nature of thy services.

*Spirit.* I give him strength, enlarge his heart, protect  
His life, extend his realm, diffuse his glory,  
And rifle, at his bidding, earth, and sea.

*B. Hadd.* Thou brought'st these treasures then ?

*Spirit.* My servants did.

*Ab.* Stay — tell me — shall I see thee —

*Spirit.* When thou sitt'st

Upon thy father's throne.

*(The smoke disperses, the image fades and disappears.)*

*Ab.* By Astaroth !

My faith extended not to this : — the words,  
The self-same syllables, ne'er breathed to mortal, —  
In which a potent Chaldee summed my fate.

*Had.* Nothing escapes them.

*Ab.* Hence, Hadad, hence my fears,  
My cares, my policy, my flattering arts  
To win the people, and strike root so deep  
That none could pluck me. — Ever in my ears  
Rung the presaging voice ; — and years of toil  
Yield but this hairbreadth. How, in half a moon,  
Could I have built my name to that great height,  
Needful to front my father's power ? how sought  
The dangerous elements ? how organized them ? ——  
Now, like Manoah's son, my hidden strength  
Can shake the kingdom when my trumpet sounds.

*Had.* *(to BALAAM-HADDON.)*

What seest thou ? — what transports thee ? —

*(To ABSALOM.)*

Mark ! — mark him !

*B. Hadd.* Far off — far off —

Enthroned upon a pedestal so high  
That East and West behold it — nations kneel  
To kiss its base — the symbol in its hand

Marks universal power ; — its radiant head  
Bears to the sky a diadem so bright  
That suns look pale ; — its arm gigantic crests  
Heaven, like the zodiac, and o'erawes the world ! —  
Mountains unhoard their treasures, ocean breaks  
Obedient at its footstool ; every tongue  
And people shout, " Hosanna to the Son  
Of David ! "

*Had. (starting.)* Ha !

*Ab.* He faints.

*Had.* The wonted trance —

Thus lay the son of Beor on Mount Pisgah,  
By Balak's altars. — Powers Demonian, mark,  
Record ! (*Aside and agitated.*)

*Ab.* But heard you how he spake ?

*Had.* He spake  
The Spirit's bidding, Prince. Observed you not  
The supernatural brightness of his eye,  
The majesty that swelled his form, his voice  
How godlike ? Into him the Shadow passed,  
Foretold, and left him.

*Ab.* Darest thou hope for me  
An empire so magnificent ?

*Had.* My lord, my lord, thou deem'st this little realm  
Much, and aspir'st, as to the top of glory,  
To rule these Tribes, and curb the neighbour Kings ;  
But seest not, for thou hast not roamed the world,  
Kingdoms on kingdoms opening to thy view,  
In prospect dazzling as the vales of Heaven ;  
Thrones ancient as the Flood, where mighty Kings  
Rule, toward the rising sun, o'er plains where gold,

And ivory, and aloes, and almug,  
Abound like olives on the hills of Judah,  
Or palms by Jericho, where spicy Isles  
Perfume the seas, and coral rocks and pearl  
Glitter along the shore. There thou mayst win  
Thy conquering way, there plant thy throne, and wield  
The universal sceptre.

*Ab.* Is thy tongue  
Endued with witchcraft?

*Had.* None thou need'st, to stand  
The World's acknowledged master. Hadst thou not  
The Spirit's promise, in these caves behold  
A talisman, and in thy father's veterans  
Unshrinking agents to thy boldest wish.  
He from the sheep-cote to the sceptre rose ;  
Thou, with that sceptre, grasped in manhood's prime,  
Mayst subjugate mankind. But such designs  
Require immediate action, cannot linger  
An old man's ebbing sands : that were to lose  
Irreparable time, which, seized, extends  
Thy empire past the pillars of Sesostris.

*Ab.* Come, these are fond conceits that make one  
giddy.

The place, or hour, or that unearthly form,  
Whose thrilling accents vibrate in my ears,  
Or thy wild visions, or these heaps of gold,  
Disorder me. My brain seems all on fire,  
Yet a sepulchral coldness numbs my heart.  
Let 's leave this treasure-house of death. I 'll pause,  
This night, upon it. If to-morrow dawn  
Upon my unchanged purpose, thou must speed  
To Geshur, and, perhaps, Damascus.

*Had.* Look,  
The Mage recovers ; let us lead him hence.\*

(*Exeunt.*)

## SCENE II.

*An apartment in OBIL'S house : OBIL and MALCUTH.*

*Mal.* What shakes thee so, and makes thee look so pale ?

*Obil.* That dromedary Fiend, — that beast of Hell, —  
Lean, black, and demon-like, it stands ; it eats not,  
Drinks not to satisfy an ass's foal ;  
But ruminates the livelong day, and glares  
Upon me when I enter, with an eye  
Of such unnatural meaning, that I quake  
Lest human words should follow. In the gloom,  
Its eyeballs burn like living fire. Just now,  
As in the torchlight trembling I approached it,  
I thought — I swear, I thought she folded quickly  
A griffin wing.

*Mal.* What senseless prate is this ?

*Obil.* And when I wait, by night, without the walls,  
Long ere his step is audible, she snorts,  
Springs, rears, and trembles, turns her flaring nostril  
Up toward the midnight clouds, and paws, and spurns,

\* "He," (Manasseh, King of Judah,) "observed times, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a Familiar Spirit." — 2 CHRON. xxxiii. 6.

And vanishes, when Hadad mounts, as yet  
Earth-born Aashari\* never did.

*Mal.* And this  
Has blanched thy manhood so?

*Obil.* I 've marked, besides,  
When from his night-career, at dawn, he comes,  
Though flaked with foam, and panting like a steed  
That has outstripped the ostrich, not a hair  
Is stained, no speck of clay deforms her limbs.  
Hassid, our son, is bold, and he declares,  
As on a gusty night he stood by Kedron  
Awaiting in my stead, a spectral voice  
Accosted Hadad ere beyond his hearing,  
And in the hollow wind their accents mingled.

*Mal.* His fear, you mean, mistook the wind for voices.

*Obil.* After this present business, whose blind haste  
Betides to beasts and riders length of rest,  
I 'll to my tents: I 've gold enough: I 'll tend  
No demon coursers, though a Prince bestride them.

*Mal.* Thou 'dst hold the rein barehead' to Beelzebub,  
So he would stuff thy turban folds with shekels.

*Obil.* Peace, cassowar! Has Maugrabin been here?

*Mal.* No, no. But tell me, Obil,  
Know you the purpose of these meetings?

*Obil.* Hush! hark! — They bode more good to  
Ishmael  
Than cockered Isaac — Hark! (*A knocking.*) Begone  
I say.

(*Exit MALCUTH.*)

\* The fleetest kind of dromedary.

(OBIL *passes through an outer room to the door, and returns assisting in* MEPHIBOSHETH.)

*Mephib.* Look to my mule, good fellow, wilt thou, quick?

Take her from sight. — And dally not.

(*Exit* OBIL.)

Now let me breathe; — no eye beholds me here, —  
But in the streets, methought, each one I met  
Gazed on me, whispering with suspicious looks,  
“Where goes Mephibosheth at this dusk hour?” (4)  
Voices and feet seemed following me. — ’T is strange. —  
How oft have I preferred the evening shade  
To visit Ramah, or go down to Bethel,  
Pleased with the starry dimness! Now, the night  
Seems but the pall of guilt. Conspiracy!  
If thou canst look so grim to me, — dethroned,  
Dishonored, stripped of all my noblest rights, —  
How colorest thou thy devilish front to him,  
The chief conspirer? — What,

(*Re-enter* OBIL.)

are they not come?

*Obil.* O, yes, my lord, since the first watch.

*Mephib.* What! what!

*Obil.* This way, my lord.

(*Exeunt.*)



## SCENE III.

*Another apartment. ABSALOM, HADAD, AHITHOPHEL, MANASSES, and MALCHIAH, seated round a table, with lights and parchments, in consultation. Enter OBIL, with MEPHIBOSHETH.*

*Ab.* Good even, Prince.

*Ahith.* Prosperity to Benjamin.

*Mephib.* Health to my lord, — to grave Ahithophel, —  
To all. (*Seats himself at the table.*)

*Had.* Time urges. Shall we call in Caleb?

*Ab.* Ay, instantly.

(*OBIL goes out, on a sign from HADAD. ABSALOM turns to MEPHIBOSHETH.*)

Prince, all the northern Tribes,  
To Benjamin are sure. Here are the seals  
Of Gad and Reuben : Naphtali is sworn,  
And Pagiél, their prince, has twice passed down,  
Communing with our partisans as far  
As Shiloh. Twenty thousand valiant men  
Wait but our summons. Such, in brief, these letters,  
All verbally confirmed by faithful couriers,  
Whose words and pledges we have ta'en to-night.  
*Mephib.* Business has thriven, my lord, in my poor  
absence.

*Re-enter OBIL with a Courier.*

*Ab.* What tidings, Caleb, from the hill country ?

*Courier.* Every face, my Prince,  
Is lifted to salute the sun.

*Ahith.* All tiptoe on the mountains, say'st thou? —  
Well,

A speedy and a glorious dawn awaits them,  
A rising such as Judah never saw.

*Ab.* What cities hast thou greeted?

*Courier.* All the chief  
From Ajalon to Kadesh. — This, from Giloh,  
My lord Ahithophel; this from the chiefs  
Of Ziph and Lachish.

(*Takes letters from the folds of his cap for*  
*ABSALOM and AHITHOPHEL.*)

*Ahith.* (*after perusing his despatches.*)  
All 's well; and bids us not delay.

*Ab.* This missive  
Seals our resolves. It comes from Ithamar. —  
Our royal trumpet will be blown in Hebron  
At the sixth hour to-morrow.

*Mephib.* (*starting.*) How! to-morrow?

*Malchi.* To-morrow, Prince?

*Ab.* Ten thousand men encamp  
Before it ere that hour. By eventide,  
The news must be beyond the Kishon.

*Mephib.* (*aside.*) Moses!

*Ahith.* Be not surprised, my lords: our safety lies  
In suddenness. The cloud is in the heaven,  
The bolt must fly, or men will shun it.

*Manass.* Yes, but —

*Had.* Pardon, my lord Manasses, — I am rude, —  
And sage Ahithophel, our reverend Thummim,  
Grant me a word. We twice have been convened,  
Without our friends Malchiah and Manasses.

Briefly to them I state what you have heard. —  
I have myself passed through the Tribes ; with all  
The Princes, Judges, powerful of our friends,  
Held personal conference ; to the nicest point  
Instructed them ; ta'en pledges ; armed their mouths  
With potent arguments ; explaining thus  
The strong necessity of all we do.  
The King, whom Heaven preserve ! declined in years,  
Lets fall the reins ; oppressors lord it ; wrongs  
Cry in the streets with none to hear ; the Judge  
Sits not between the gates ; the King nor hears,  
Nor substitutes : imperious Joab rules  
God's heritage, and shakes his bloody hand  
Over the innocent : old Nathan sits  
Close at his master's ear, whispering against  
The People's Chosen, bent to crown the boy,  
Whom secretly, 't is said, he hath affianced  
To Pharaoh's infant daughter. When the fit  
Of penitential horror shakes the King,  
He talks of Amnon, — fratricide, — and blood  
Demanding expiation, and alarms  
His mind infirm with guilt and punishment.  
Thus stands the kingdom ; thus your cherished hopes  
Totter to downfall. And will warlike Israel  
Behold her lawful, her elected Prince  
Undone by treacherous instruments ? submit  
Her stainless sceptre to a murderer's hand ?  
For what awes ruthless Joab from the crown  
But Absalom ? Think you, a Prince's blood,  
A helpless youth, were sacred in his sight  
If David slept, and Absalom were not,

Who, only, never feared him? Men of Israel,  
Would you perpetuate your royal line,  
Age must resign the rod of power to manhood. —  
With these, my lords, and other arguments  
Suggested by the wise Ahithophel,  
Are they replenished, and prepared for action.

*Manass.* Then let us on.

*Had.* My uncle promises  
Full fifteen thousand footmen, and is pledged  
A thousand chariots, and five thousand horse  
By Hadadezer, if the sword decide it:  
Our grandsire Talmai\* empties all his realm.

*Malchi.* I 'm satisfied, my lord.

*Mephib.* Sirs, may the son of Saul  
A moment's audience crave?

*Ab.* Speak, worthy Prince.

*Mephib.* My lord, I have allied to this great cause  
The strongest Tribe save Judah. I demand  
Recognition, before these witnesses,  
Of promises not mentioned, as were meet,  
Before this solemn sitting. — Yes, my lords,  
I claim his oath, that, if by me, the strength  
Of Benjamin were added, he would bound  
His power by Jordan eastward, and resign  
The ancient sovereignty of Ishbosheth  
To me, the lineal heir. (*A pause.*)

*Manass.* Can this be so?

*Malchi.* Divide the sceptre!

*Ahith.* (*smiting the table.*) Never!

\* The King of Geshur, — the maternal grandfather of Absalom, and supposed to bear the same relationship to Hadad.

*Mephib.* But he hath sworn it.

*Ab.* If the Tribes consented.

*Mephib.* The pledge was absolute, —  
There stands your organ. Let him answer.

*Ab.* Hadad ?

*Had.* My lord Mephibosheth, — if I err not, —  
That promise was conditioned on —

*Mephib.* Nothing ! —

By God's Ark ! 't was a solemn gage, — unclogged, —  
And bound his princely honor to enforce it.

(HADAD *draws* ABSALOM *apart.*)

*Manass.* We have no right to mutilate the sceptre ;  
The royalty is Judah's.

*Ahith.* Fixed in him :

A right perpetual promised.

*Mephib.* Ye mock, — ye mock !

A right forsooth ! — By what right sit ye here  
In treasonous council ? Plead ye right for this —

*Had.* The sooner, Prince, the better.

*Ab.* (to *MEPHIB.*) The question of divided sove-  
reignty

Requiring grave debate, and general sanction,  
Must wait the assembling of the Tribes, my lord. —

Let us dissolve now : all is understood. —

My father's leave is won, to sacrifice

In solemn state at Hebron, to fulfill

My vow in Geshur. Meet me there to-morrow.

The flower of Judah will attend in arms.

Stir with the dawn ; nor marvel if ye spy

Friends of the King upon the way : I 've bid

Two hundred follow us, the more to cloak

The enterprise. And now, my lords, farewell.

*Manass.* Farewell.

*Malchi.* Farewell and prosper, noble Prince.

*Ab.* Take separate streets, you who ascend to Zion.  
I keep the west, by Millo.

*Manass.* We 'll be guarded.

(*Exeunt all but HADAD, MEPHIBOSHETH, and OBIL.*)

*Mephib.* Fit recompense  
For trusting traitors! — Fellow, bring my mule.

*Had.* Stay. —

You go not forth to-night.

*Mephib.* How now!

Thou shuffling, perjured ——

*Had.* Curb your passion, Prince.

*Mephib.* Now, by the bones of Saul —— Bring forth  
my mule.

*Had.* (*to OBIL.*) Stir, and thou diest.

*Mephib.* Ruffian, meanest to slay me?

*Had.* Hear me, my lord. The Prince's words, 't is  
true,

I strained beyond their ——

*Mephib.* Leprous Gentile!

Lie to your brutish gods, lie not to me!

*Had.* No matter: you and I best know the where-  
fore: —

But danger 's in thine eye, and I 'll not risk  
The safety of the state. You must repose  
Beneath good Obil's roof to-night.

*Mephib.* Abhorred,  
Damned, heathen parasite ——

*Had.* Tush! have a care!

(*Half draws his dagger, with a threatening  
glance: then turns to OBIL.*)

Provide thy best for Prince Mephibosheth ;  
Respect him as myself ; but if he look  
Beyond thy doors ere the third morning hour,  
Your blood be on ye both ! — What ! hear'st thou ?

*Obil.* Master, reverently.

*Had.* Remember ! — eyes will be about these doors  
Which ye were best avoid. — Good rest, my lord.

*(Returns his dagger to the sheath, and exit.*

*Scene closes.)*

#### SCENE IV.

*An apartment in ABSALOM'S house. NATHAN and  
TAMAR.*

*Nath.* But tell me, hast thou ever noted  
Amidst his many shining qualities  
Aught strange or singular ? — unlike to others ?  
That caused thy wonder ? even to thyself  
Moved thee to say, “ How ? — Wherefore 's this ? ”

*Tam.* Never.

*Nath.* Nothing that marked him from the rest of  
men ? —

Hereafter you shall know why thus I question.

*Tam.* O yes, unlike he seems in many things :  
In knowledge, eloquence, high thoughts.

*Nath.* Proud thoughts  
Thou mean'st ?

*Tam.* I 'm but a young and simple maid,  
But, father, he, of all my ears have judged,  
Is master of the loftiest, richest mind.

*Nath.* How have I wronged him ; deeming him more  
apt

For intricate designs, and daring deeds,  
Than contemplation's solitary flights.

*Tam.* Seer, his far-soaring thoughts ascend the stars,  
Pierce the unseen abyss, pervade, like light,  
The universe, and wing the infinite.

*Nath.* (*fixing his eyes upon her.*)  
What stores of love, and praise, and gratitude,  
He thence must bring to Him whose mighty hand  
Fashioned their glories, hung yon golden orbs  
Amidst his wondrous firmament ; who bids  
The day-spring know his place, and sheds from all  
Sweet influences ; who bars the haughty sea,  
Binds fast his dreadful hail, but drops the dew  
Nightly upon his People ! How his soul,  
Returning from its quest through Earth and Heaven,  
Must glow with holy fervor ! — Doth it, maiden ?

*Tam.* Ah ! father, father, were it so indeed,  
I were too happy.

*Nath.* How ! — expound thy words.

*Tam.* Though he has trod the confines of the world,  
Knows all its wonders, and almost has pierced  
The secrets of eternity, his heart  
Is melancholy, lone, discordant, save  
When love attunes it into happiness.  
He hath not found, alas, the peace which dwells  
But with our Fathers' God.

*Nath.* And canst thou love  
One who loves not Jehovah ?

*Tam.* O, ask not.



*Nath.* (*fervently.*)

My child ! thou wouldst not wed an Infidel ?

*Tam.* (*in tears.*) O no ! O no !

*Nath.* Why then this embassy ? Why doth your  
sire

Still urge the King ? Why hast thou hearkened it ?

*Tam.* There was a time when I had hopes, — when  
truth

Seemed dawning in his mind, — and sometimes, still,  
Such heavenly glimpses shine, that my fond heart  
Refuses to forego the hope, at last,  
To number him with Israel.

*Nath.* Beware !

Or thou 'lt delude thy soul to ruin. Say,  
Doth he attend our holy ordinances ?

*Tam.* He promises observance.

*Nath.* Two full years  
Hath he abode in Jewry.

*Tam.* Prophet, think  
How he was nurtured — in the faith of Idols. —  
That impious worship long since he abjured  
By his own native strength ; and now he looks  
Abroad through Nature's works, and yet must rise —

*Nath.* Speaks he of Moses ?

*Tam.* Familiar as thyself.

*Nath.* I think thou saidst he had surveyed the world ?

*Tam.* O, father, he can speak  
Of hundred-gated Thebes, towered Babylon,  
And mightier Nineveh, vast Palibothra,  
Serendib anchored by the gates of morning,  
Renowned Benares, where the Sages teach

The mystery of the soul, and that famed Ilium  
Where fleets and warriors from Elishah's Isles  
Besieged the Beauty, where great Memnon fell : —  
Of pyramids, temples, and superstitious caves  
Filled with strange symbols of the Deity ;  
Of wondrous mountains, desert-circled seas,  
Isles of the ocean, lovely Paradises,  
Set, like unfading emeralds, in the deep.

*Nath.* Yet manhood scarce confirms his cheek.

*Tam.* All this

His thirst of knowledge has achieved ; the wish  
To gather from the wise eternal Truth.

*Nath.* Not found where he has sought it, and has led  
Thy wandering fancy.

*Tam.* O, might I relate —

But I bethink me, father, of a thing  
Like that you asked. — Sometimes, when I'm alone, —  
Just ere his coming, — I have heard a sound,  
A strange, mysterious, melancholy sound, —  
Like music in the air. Anon, he enters.

*Nath.* Ha ! is this oft ?

*Tam.* 'T is not unfrequent.

*Nath.* Only

When thou 'rt alone ?

*Tam.* I have not heard it else.

*Nath.* A sound like what ?

*Tam.* Like wild, sad music, father ;  
More moving than the lute or viol touched  
By skilful fingers. Wailing in the air  
It seems around me, and withdraws as when  
One looks and lingers for a last adieu.

*Nath.* Just ere he enters ?

*Tam.* At his step it dies.

*Nath.* Mark me. — Thou know'st 't is held by righteous men,

That Heaven intrusts us all to Holy Watchers, <sup>(5)</sup>  
Who ward us from the Tempter. — This I deem  
Some intimation of an unseen danger.

*Tam.* But whence ?

*Nath.* Time may reveal : meanwhile, I warn thee,  
Trust not thyself alone with Hadad.

*Tam.* Think'st thou —

*Nath.* I scarce know what I think, — my thoughts are  
troubled.

If some lewd Spirit, taken with thy beauty,  
Or plotting to deceive and disunite us,  
Could put on human semblance, this were he.

*Tam.* O ! father, father —

*Nath.* Inscrutable he seems, yet ever busy ;  
His mocking eye insults, while it emits  
The malice of the serpent : snake-like, too,  
He slinks away, even while his looks dart fury.  
Nay, nay — I lay not to his charge — I know  
Little of him, though I have supplicated —  
I will not wound thee with my dark suspicions —  
But shun the peril thou art warned of, shun  
What looks like danger though we haply err.  
Be not alone with him I charge thee.

*Tam.* Seer,  
I will avoid it.

*Nath.* All is ominous :  
The Oracles are mute, dreams warn no more,

Urim and Thummim keep their glory hid,  
My days are dark, my nights are visionless,  
Jehovah hath forsaken, or in wrath,  
Resigned us for a season. Times like these  
Are jubilee in Hell. Fiends walk the Earth, <sup>(6)</sup>  
Misleading princes, tempting poor men's pillows,  
Supplying moody hatred with the dagger,  
Lust with occasions, treason with excuses,  
Lifting man's heart, like the rebellious waves,  
Against his Maker. Watch, and pray, and tremble ;  
So may the Highest overshadow thee !  
(NATHAN retires, followed slowly out by TAMAR.)

## SCENE V.

*The gate of the city, looking down the valley toward  
Enrogel. Several Citizens sitting in the gate. The  
Warden walking with his truncheon in his hand.*

*First Cit.* Know you what enterprise our Prince intends

After the sacrifice ?

*Second Cit.* No ; doth he any ?

*First Cit.* Eliab's son, last night, 'twixt this and  
Hebron

Met his war chariot and his battle steeds.

*Warden.* The Prince went forth at dawn this morning, Sir,

Upon a mule. His chariot has not passed.

*First Cit.* But Amariah saw it.

*Warden.* When? last night?

*First Cit.* Journeying this way, about the second watch,

He heard the clang of hoofs, and, drawing close  
Beneath some sycamores, beheld it pass,  
Horses, equerries, and a baggage wain,  
That clashed, the place being rough, as filled with  
arms.

*Third Cit.* But this is strange.

*Warden.* It did not pass this gate.

*Third Cit.* Why go about?

*First Cit.* Perhaps he meditates

A swoop upon the restless Edomite.

*Second Cit.* Look! who comes there at speed?

*First Cit.* See how for life he dashes through the  
brook,

And up the hill. — Ha! look! — the animal  
Is spent, and falls —

*Second Cit.* He stops not — lo! he comes  
Like the sped arrow. 'T is some messenger.

*Warden.* Fall back, and let him pass.

*(Warden calls aloud.)*

What for King David?

*(A messenger rushes through the gate.)*

*Mess.* War tidings — Bar the gates! —

*(Passes up into the city.)*

*Citizens.* What can it mean? — Let's after.

*(Exeunt into the city.)*

*Warden.* His looks were ominous. I'll to the tower,  
And see if any hostile shape approaches.

*(Exit.)*

## SCENE VI.

*TAMAR walking on the roof of her father's house.*

*Tam.* Once, in his gentle countenance, methought,  
Love grew on reverence, as my lips described  
The power, the patience, purity, and faith  
Of our Almighty Father! — Then I hoped  
His spirit, tempered by its earthly passion,  
Fast ripening for a love that never dies! —  
Most strange! — Incomprehensible the more,  
The more I think! — All tenderness, all love,  
He seemed, — happy and social as a child: —  
But now into such deeps of thought he lapses,  
So like despair, — as makes me weep, or, rather,  
Tremble, when snatched by some ungoverned trans-  
port ———

What sounds are those? — A tumult? — 'T is the cry  
And rush of multitudes! — What noise is that?

*(To BAGOAS, who enters hastily.)*

*Bag.* 'T is nothing, Princess. — Come within.

*Tam.* Hark! — Hark! —

The clamor rises!

*Bag.* Nay, most honored Princess ———

*(Attempts to lead her away.)*

*Tam.* Unhand me, slave!

*Bag.* Beseech ye — stern was his command  
Thou shouldst not stir abroad, or look without,  
Until my lord's return. My life must answer 't.

*Tam. (looking from the parapet.)*

Good heavens! — What dire disaster? — Whence that  
throng

Of frantic women — children — ancient men

Tearing their beards and garments — Ha! the Ark!

Abiathar and Zadok weeping by it —

The Priests and Levites — Gracious God! some foe

Hath sure surprised us! — Hear me! — People! —

Friends! —

*Bag. Hark, lady! — Princess, —*

*(Kneels.)*

*Tam. Horror! there 's the King —*

Barefoot — amidst his weeping household —

*Bag. No, no —*

*Tam. His gray head bare — his mantle rent! — O,  
hear me!*

*(Stretching her hands to the people below.)*

Look up! — O, answer me! — My father David! —

*Bag. (drawing her away.) Cry not, but listen —*

*Tam. (breaking from him, rushes again to the parapet.)*

Ho! hear me! — Levites! — Friends! — Will no one  
answer?

*Bag. I 'll answer, lady: call not to the people.*

*Tam. (wildly.)*

What has befallen him? — wherefore 's the tumult?

*Bag. Your grandsire is no longer King.*

*Tam. Alas!*

Is Zion taken?

*Bag. Not by foes. — The Prince,*

Your father, wears, to-day, the Hebrew crown.

*Tam.* (*thunderstruck.*) My father!

*Bag.* Surely, Princess; — look not pale.

*Tam.* (*gasping for breath.*) My father — my ——

*Bag.* By all the gods, 't is true, — may wrath o'ertake  
me

If I deceive you, — crowned this day at Hebron.

What say'st? —— thy white lips move ——

(*TAMAR falls senseless.*)



## ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The top of Mount Olivet, crowded with fugitives from Jerusalem: King DAVID, surrounded by his household, worshipping: the Cherethites and Pelethites\* restrain the People from pressing upon him. JOAB, BENAIAH, and other armed Chiefs, marshalling the multitude.*

*Ben.* Go bid yon loiterers hasten over Kedron,  
If they would march with us.

*Joab.* Let them abide:—

Why crawl they after us?—What seest thou, ho?

*(Addressing a Soldier stationed in a tree above him.)*

*Soldier.* Nothing, my lord, but people from the city  
Hurrying this way.

*Joab.* Look not on them, fool: fix  
Thine eyes upon the south.

*Soldier.* I do, my lord.

*Joab.* What seest thou toward the Prince's pillar?

*Soldier.* Nothing.

*Joab.* On that same open height beyond it?

*Soldier.* Nothing.

*Joab.* Well, nail thine eyes there.—Will the old  
man's prayer  
Stretch out till doom? Benaiah, we lose time;  
We should be now beyond Bahurim.

\* The Cherethites and Pelethites, or the Extirpators and the Expeditions, were the King's military attendants, and the immediate agents of his will.

*Ben.* Be patient ;  
The stroke was bitter, and his heart seemed fraught  
Almost to bursting.

*Joab.* Better rive at once,  
Than meet the tender mercies of his son  
By loitering here. By Heaven, I 'll rouse him —

*Ben.* Hold,  
Hold, Joab !

*People.* Stand aside ! — Back there ! — The King !

*(King DAVID comes forward among the People :*

*Enter HUSHAI, with his garments rent ; he  
falls to the ground, and clasps the King's  
feet.)*

*Hush.* God save my lord the King ! Live I to see  
My master thus ! the Light, the Rock of Israel !

*K. Dav.* Once, Hushai, once the candle of the Lord  
Beamed on my head, and, like a shadowing rock,  
His buckler sheltered me. Thou seest me, now,  
Dark and defenceless ; all my leprous sins  
Wrathfully visited upon my people.

*First People.* What will become of us ?

*Second People.* Alas ! alas !  
Heaven hath forsaken us !

*Third People.* Woe, woe, alas !

*Joab.* *(going among them.)*  
Peace with your howling ! Peace ! or ye shall feast  
The wild beasts of the wilderness. — My lord,  
We linger here while death is at our heels.

*K. Dav.* Hushai.

*Hush.* Command thy servant.

*K. Dav.* Turn thou back :

Mix with his council : seem as they. Thy words  
May blast Ahithophel's, whose malice, else,  
Will work our ruin. With us thou canst nought. —  
Abiathar and Zadok stay behind,  
By my commandment, with the Ark. To them  
Communicate what thou canst learn of import :  
They will despatch it to me by their sons,  
Where I shall wait them in the wilderness.

*Joab.* Depart ere thou art seen.

*Hush.* God guard the King,  
And bring him home to Zion.

(*Exit.*)

*Soldier.* (*calling from the tree.*)

Joab, — my lord, — I see the flash of arms  
On that same hill. — The vanguard comes — and now  
The horsemen. —

*Joab.* Make they for the city ?

*Soldier.* Straight.

*Joab.* Enough ; descend. — Shall we advance ?

*K. Dav.* Is there conveyance for the household ?

*Joab.* None.

*People.* Yes, Ziba 's here with asses.

*Second People.* Only two.

*Joab.* (*impatiently.*)

Therefore, my lord, behoves us haste. Suppose  
His horse o'ertake us in the open plain,  
Cumbered with women ?

*K. Dav.* Bid the Pelethites

Take up the youngest. Place upon the beasts  
Michal and Bathsheba. Send forward some  
For mules and camels, if the villages  
Or fields can yield us any. — Where 's the Prophet ?

*Joab.* Yonder, with Solomon. — Art ready, Sir?

*K. Dav.* Ittai, protect the rearward. Station one  
To bring intelligence. — Command the signal.

*Joab.* (to his trumpeter.) Sound.

(Trumpet sounds: exeunt the King and People,  
guarded by the armed bands.)

## SCENE II.

*The palace: an antechamber of the council-hall: Officers of ABSALOM'S Guard, Attendants, &c., in waiting.*

*First Off.* Will their debate ne'er end?

*Second Off.* No, by the proverb,  
Never: when gossip graybeards talk, the sun  
Stands still.

*Enter HADAD from the hall.*

*Had.* (to one of the Attendants.)

What, is she come yet?

*Attend.* No, my lord.

*Had.* (aside.) This is His spite! —

You bore the signet? — saw the Princess?

*Attend.* Yes, my lord.

*Had.* Why didst thou not stay by her when thou  
saw'st

The streets in tumult?

*Attend.* I was bid depart.

*Had.* O curse! — (Turns angrily into the hall.)

*First Off.* What clouds the Syrian? What 's amiss,  
(*To the Attendant.*)

That Hadad bites his lip with such a frown?

*Attend.* The Princess, Sir, is missing.

*Officers.* Missing! Ha! (*They gather round him.*)

But how?

*Attend.* It happened thus. Imploring leave  
To come unto her father, he despatched  
Permission by his signet; but she came not,  
Though she had thrice entreated him with tears.  
It since appears, refusing all attendance,  
Except a slave, she went into the streets,  
And has not since been heard of.

*First Off.* When was this?

*Attend.* About the hour of twilight.

*First Off.* 'T is dark night: (*Looking out.*)

The city 's in confusion: she may suffer  
Some shameful outrage.

*Attend.* That is feared indeed:

Bagoas raves, and tears his hair, and Hadad —

*Re-enter HADAD.*

*Had.* Brave gallants of the guard, the King commands

Ye follow me. The Princess Tamar 's lost,  
This riotous night, we fear, amidst the streets.  
Ride six of you, for life, to every gate,  
And bid them, in the King's name, suffer none  
Pass outward. — Scatter through the streets your comrades;  
Pierce sharply through the people; — scan the crowds. —  
If ye espy her, send me instant news

To Zion gate by Gihon. On the bridge  
’Twixt the two cities I will post myself.  
Away! (*Exeunt Officers of the Guard.*)

(*To one of the Attendants.*)

— Come hither. Know’st thou that dark alley  
Behind the Market-place?

*Attend.* I do, my lord.

*Had.* Run thither. Near a lattice thou wilt see  
A low, dark man, in a Scribe’s gaberdine,  
Devoutly searching Moses, by a lamp  
Niched in the wall. Say Hadad’s treasure ’s lost, —  
The Princess, — lost in the unruly streets,  
And spirited, perhaps, into some den  
Of mischief. Bid him search, and come to me  
Upon the western bridge o’er Gihon. Fly!  
(*Exit Attendant.*)

Off — off — disperse yourselves in every quarter: —  
If ye hear tidings, haste to me. — Stay thou  
The King’s forthcoming. — He shall be enriched,  
Who first salutes me with intelligence.  
(*Exeunt.*)

### SCENE III.

*The council-hall. ABSALOM, AHITHOPHEL, MANASSES,  
MALCHIAH, HUSHAI, and others, in debate: AHITHO-  
PHEL speaking.*

*Ahith.* My lord, you know them not; — you wear,  
to-day,  
The diadem, and hear yourself proclaimed

With trump and timbrel Israel's joy, and deem  
Your lasting throne established. Canst thou bless,  
Or blast, like Him who rent the waters, clave  
The rock, whose awful clangor shook the world  
When Sinai quaked beneath his majesty ?  
Yet Jacob's seed forsook this thundering Guide,  
Even at the foot of the astonished mount ! —  
If benefits could bind them, wherefore flames  
The Ammonitish spoil upon thy brows,  
While David's locks are naked to the night dew ?  
Canst thou transcend thy father ? Is thy arm  
Stronger than his who smote from sea to sea,  
And girt us like a band of adamant ? —  
Trust not their faith. Thy father's root is deep :  
His stock will bourgeon with a single sun ;  
And many tears will flow to moisten him. —  
Pursue, this night, or ruin will o'ertake thee.

*Ab.* What say'st thou, Hushai ? Speak to this, once  
more.

*Hush.* I listen to my lord Ahithophel,  
As to a heaven-instructed oracle ;  
But what he urges more alarms my fears.  
Thou seest, O King, how night envelopes us :  
Amidst its perils, whom must we pursue ?  
The son of Jesse is a man of war,  
Old in the field, hardened to danger, skilled  
In every wile and stratagem ; the night  
More welcome than the day. Each mountain path  
He treads instinctive as the ibex ; sleeps,  
Moistened with cold, dank drippings of the rock,  
As underneath the canopy. Some den

Will be his bed to-night. No hunter knows  
Like him, the caverns, cliffs, and treacherous passes ;  
Familiar to his feet, in former days,  
As 'twixt the Court and Tabernacle ! What !  
Know ye not how his great heart swells in danger,  
Like the old lion's from his lair by Jordan ? ——  
Beware of him, by night, while chafed with anger.  
Surprisa! — While we talk, they lurk in ambush,  
Expectant of their prey : the Cherethites,  
And those bloody-thirsty Gittites, crouch around him,  
Like evening wolves : fierce Joab darts his eyes,  
Keen as the leopard's, out into the night,  
And curses our delay ; Abishai raves ;  
Benaiah, Ittai, and the Tachmonite,  
And they, the mighty three, who broke the host  
Of the Philistines, and from Bethlehem well  
Drew water, when the King but thirsted, now,  
Raven like beasts bereaved of their young. —  
We go not after boys, but the Gibborim,  
Whose bloody weapons never struck but triumphed.

*Malchi.* It were a doubtful quest.

*Hush.* Hear me, O King.

Go not to night, but summon, with the dawn,  
Israel's ten thousands ; mount thy conquering car,  
Surrounded by innumerable hosts,  
And go, their strength, their glory, and their King,  
Almighty to the battle ; for what might  
Can then resist thee ? Light upon this handful,  
Like dew upon the earth ; or, if they bar  
Some city's gates against thee, let the people  
Level its puny ramparts, stone by stone,



And cast them into Jordan. Thus my lord  
May bind his crown with wreaths of victory,  
And owe his kingdom to no second arm.

*Ahith.* O blindness! lunacy!

*Hush.* I would retire ;  
Ye have my counsel.

*Ahith.* Would thou hadst not come,  
To linger out with thy pernicious talk  
The hours of action.

*Hush.* Wise Ahithophel,  
No longer I 'll offend thee. Please the King ——  
(*ABSALOM waves him to resume his seat.*)

*Ahith.* By all your hopes, my lord, of life and glory,  
I do adjure thee shut thine ears to him !  
His counsel 's fatal, if not treacherous.  
I see its issue, clearly as I see  
The badge of royalty, — not long to sit  
Where now it sparkles, if his words entice thee. —  
Never was prudence in my tongue, or now. —  
Blanched as I am, weak, withered, winter-stricken,  
Grant but twelve thousand men, and I 'll go forth.  
Weary, weak-handed, what can they, if taken,  
Now, in their first alarm ?

*Ab.* Were this resolved,  
We would not task thy age. What think ye, Sirs ?

*Manass.* My lord, the risk is great : a night assault  
Deprives us of advantage from our numbers,  
Which in the open field insure success ;  
And news of a disaster blown about,  
And magnified, just now, when all are trembling,  
Might lose a Tribe, might wound us fatally.  
*Hushai's* advice appears most prudent.

*Ahith.* Fate!

*Malchi.* I think so too, my lord.

*Others.* And I. And I.

*Ahith.* Undone!

*Ab.* The council are agreed, this once,  
Against you, and with them the King accords.

*Ahith.* (*stretching his hands toward ABSALOM.*)  
Against thyself — thy throne — thy life — thy all! —  
Darkness has entered thee, — confusion waits thee, —  
Death brandishes his dart at thee, and grins  
At thy brief diadem! — Farewell! Farewell! —  
Remember me! — I 'll not be checked and rated, —  
Branded with treason, — see my hoary hairs  
Hooted and scoffed at, were they spared, indeed,  
For such indignity. — Thou 'lt follow soon.

(*Exit.*)

*Ab.* Or win or lose, we walk not by thy light.

*Malchi.* The old man's strangely moved.

*Manass.* His fury seemed  
Prophetical.

*Ab.* The council is dissolved,  
Here to assemble in the morning early,  
To order for our absence. Leave us now  
To private business.

*Counsellors.* Save our lord the King.

(*Exeunt.*)

## SCENE IV.

*The bridge over Gihon by the corner of Millo, between the upper and lower city : illuminations seen on the housetops : sounds of nocturnal riot and confusion in the streets : HADAD walking impatiently backwards and forwards on the bridge. Distant shouts.*

*Had. (listening.)*

Mouthed brutes! — King Absalom! — King Log! — I  
care not —

Zion sanctissime! — How bloodily  
The fires of jubilee flash to the clouds! —  
Or wind, or thunder's mustering! Their pale faces,  
Huddled upon the housetops, look like ghosts  
Come fresh from battle. Yea, were our grim confines  
Peopled, polluted with a herd like this,  
They were infernal. Thieves, beggars, bravoës, base  
Nethinims, harlots, tattered prodigals  
Flock from their holes to shout for Absalom!  
The filth of Jebus — Ha! what cry is that?

*(Listens anxiously.)*

Where can they loiter? — Should some ruffian clasp  
Her peerless beauty! Well, His sanctitude  
Suffers: — there's comfort. Hark! a rabblement  
Hoots this way. — Let me shun their drunken madness.

*(Retires into the shade of Millo : enter a Crowd from the lower city, shouting.)*

*First Crowd.* Hurrah for Absalom! King Absalom!

*Second Crowd.* Down with the Graybeard!

*Third Crowd.* Down with the Giant-queller !

*Fourth Crowd.* Hold, Sirs, — hold, while I chant a  
canticle

Indited for next Feast of Tabernacles,  
On that same doughty feat.

*Fifth Crowd. (drunk.)* A murrain take  
Your canticles ! Cry, “ Long live Absalom ! ”

*Fourth Crowd.* Whom have we there, my masters ?  
— See ye not ?

Bolt upright by the wall ? — Rabbi, who art thou ?  
Emerge, I say : — come from the land of shadows :  
Art thou for Absalom ?

*Had.* Ay.

*Fifth Crowd.* Then show thyself.

*Had.* I ’m stationed by the King.

*Crowd.* Molest him not ;  
He says he ’s of our party.

*Fifth Crowd.* Let him shout. (*Approaches HADAD.*)  
Uplift thy voice. Wast thou born dumb ?

*Crowd.* Look ! look !  
What throng is that by David’s Tower ?

*Second Crowd.* Hurrah ! (*Rushes up toward Zion :  
all follow.*)

*Had. (resuming his station on the bridge.)*  
What nightmare sits on them ! They might have groped  
The Red Sea caves, the womb of Caucasus,  
The den of Hiddekel — Ha ! Maugrabin !

*MAUGRABIN looks from behind an angle of the  
neighbouring wall, and enters.*

Hast found her ? — Speak ! —

*Maug.* No track of her.

*Had.* Out, Incubus! Where hast thou idled?

*Maug.* By Trismegistus! in this half short hour  
I 've borne my clay so spitefully about,  
That eyes which saw me doubted if they saw  
Substance or shadow. Every den of mischief,  
Cavern of booty,—every partlet roost,  
Ha! ha! ha! compassed by these holy walls—  
've peeped into, and sworn by Samaël  
Hot night-caps if they touch a plume of her.  
No fear:—they know the Fowler!

*Had.* (*after a moment's thought*) Follow.

(*Exit hastily.*)

*Maug.* Whew!  
Eloim gabbathi, Asmody!

(*Exit after.*)

## SCENE V.

*The court of the Tabernacle on Mount Zion, lighted  
by a fire upon the altar of burnt-offerings: the inte-  
rior of the sanctum partially visible through the smoke  
of the incense burning there: ZADOK and ABIATHAR  
standing by the altar.*

*Abi.* The night frowns darkly, and may burst in storm  
Before our sons o'ertake the King. How, then,  
Cross ruffled Jordan with the helpless household?

*Zad.* Look not to me for cheering. Am not I  
Dark as thyself?

*Abi.* But thou didst charge the youths  
So straitly to pass o'er.

*Zad.* So Hushai bade.

*Enter TAMAR, attended by two ancient Jews.*

*Tam.* O, holy Priests! O, blessed Tabernacle!  
*Zadok*, — *Abiathar*, — will ye protect me?

*Zad.* (*supporting her.*)  
Protect thee, Princess! — thou art with sure friends.  
Whence comest thou?

*Tam.* I know not — O! I know not.

*Jew.* We rescued her from villains.

*Zad.* Merciful!  
What measure hath this dreadful day of wrath!

*Jew.* We met her in a dark and lonely place,  
West of Damascus' gate, dragged by two ruffians,  
Her mouth close bound. Perceiving us approach,  
They snatched the caul and circlet from her head,  
Tore from her arms and neck the costly gems,  
And plunged into the darkness.

*Zad.* Blest be He  
Whose mercy guided you! — How cam'st thou thus  
Exposed? — Know ye? (*to the Jews.*)

*Jew.* Hearing the Ark returned,  
She bent her steps this way, to seek of you  
Intelligence and comfort. In the dusk  
And crowded streets, losing her sole attendant,  
And borne amidst the tumult, she was seized  
By those same wretches, her pretended guides.

*Zad.* Ye've saved the Princess Tamar. Let me  
know  
Your worthy names.

*Jew.* Barak and Mahlon, kinsmen,  
Of Omri's house.

*Zad.* The deed shall be rewarded,  
If righteousness return. But leave the maid, —  
We watch before the altar, — safer here,  
In presence of the Lord, than with an host.

*Tam.* Yes, leave me, leave me, friends.

*Jew.* Farewell ! may prayers  
And sacrifice avert the threatened judgments.

(*Exeunt Jews.*)

*Tam.* O, tell me, where is David ? — I beheld him  
Barefoot and weeping — Or was that a dream ? —  
Yourselves — the Levites — weeping round the Ark ?

*Zad.* Ah ! that it were a dream !

*Tam.* What hath befallen us ? —  
O, answer, ere I grow quite wild.

*Zad.* David is driven forth.

*Tam.* Where ? where ?

*Abi.* We know not.

*Zad.* Nor where, nor how : it fell upon our heads  
Like sudden thunder.

*Tam.* Were I but with him ! —  
Ye know not where he went ? — O, doth he live ? —  
Have they not murdered him ? —

(*The Priests whisper together.*)

— Enough ! he is not ! —

*Zad.* Hearken, Princess,  
For we may trust thee. David lives. He fled  
Toward Jordan, promising to wait for tidings  
In a concerted place —

*Tam.* But will he scape ?

*Zad.* If he pass o'er to-night ; and both our sons  
Are sped to warn him.

*Tam.* Did ye urge ? — implore him ?

*Abi.* We counselled him, and he is wise of heart.

*Zad.* Calm your perturbed spirits now : repose  
Upon the Lord. His promises sustain  
Our fainting hopes : His sacred presence dwells  
Still in the Sanctuary, and forbids  
Despair. Yes, when the Ark resumed its place,  
The Glory settled 'twixt the Cherubim  
With undiminished lustre.

*Tam.* Then, there 's hope ——  
But O ! — my guilty father ! — (*Weeps bitterly.*)

*Zad.* Despair not : join with us in supplications.

*Tam.* Why did they spare me ! O, that I had died  
When death was near !

*Zad.* Disparage not thy rescuer ;  
Jehovah hears thee. — Kneel for his offences,  
For Israel's, whose portentous sins may tempt  
A retribution terrible and final.  
Enter the Sanctuary, and uplift  
Thy sorrowing heart, more prevalent than incense.  
(*They lead her into the Tabernacle.*)



## SCENE VI.

*Without the vail of the court: HADAD attended by several of ABSALOM'S guard: MAUGRABIN, at a little distance in the gloom, watching them.*

*Had.* I saw her there: she entered with the Priests.  
Go in, and say the King commands her presence.

*(The Guards pass into the court of the Tabernacle: HADAD remains, intently looking through the vail.)*

Lo! lo! — the bloody shrine of sacrifice, —  
The Cherub-tissued curtains, — the seven branches,  
Revealing through the censor's smothering fume  
The dim magnificence! — Each implement  
As he prescribed. — These must be symbols, types  
Of things hereafter.

*Maug.* (*muttering to himself.*) Tempt him, if thou wilt —

Pry in his secrets till devouring fire  
Break out upon thee — Yea, within the snuff  
Of that detested incense! How the wreaths  
Begin to curl about him! — I 'll not risk  
Annihilation.

*(Exit.)*

*Had.* Wherefore should I tremble? —  
Mortals have gazed unblinded, — Moses saw  
The lightning of his glory pass. — But I —  
How could I front the terrible array,  
If yonder vail should part? — One flash might end  
me! —

What holds them parleying? This abhorred smoke  
Is worse than Sodom, — every breath I draw  
Seems mortal agony. — Leave her I will not —

*Re-enter Guards, with TAMAR.*

Mean ye to stay eternity?

*First Guard.* We stay not.

*Had.* Peace!

*Second Guard.* (*aside to his comrade.*)

Look how convulsed and pale he is;

And see, his breast is bloody.

*Had.* (*fiercely.*) Get behind me.

(*Throws his mantle across his breast, and conducts TAMAR out, followed by the rest: she neither speaks, nor regards him.*)

## ACT V.

SCENE I. MAHANAIM, *near the principal gate of the city. The People collected: supplies of all kinds entering. King DAVID standing with JOAB, BEN-AIAH, and other Captains upon the wall, by the ascent of the gate.*

*First Citizen.* But will the battle be to-day?

*Second Cit.* You see,

The Captains are arrayed in proof; the bands  
In readiness, awaiting but the King.

*First Cit.* Where lies the foe?

*Second Cit.* Hard by the wood of Ephraim. (7)

*Enter an Old Man.*

*Old Man.* Direct mine eyes — where is he? which  
is he?

*Third Cit.* Whom seek'st thou?

*Old Man.* The Anointed, — the Sweet Singer.

*Third Cit.* Behold him yonder, on the wall,  
'Midst the Gibborim. — Seest thou not? — there, father,  
Him in the robe.

*Old Man.* Is that the King? — O, heavens!

*First Cit.* Why dost thou weep?

*Old Man.* How matted all his beard! —

Ah! how neglected! — how his reverend locks  
Are scattered! — Brothers, is it, — is it he?

*Second Cit.* He hath not trimmed his beard, nor  
changed his raiment,  
Nor slept, since he forsook Jerusalem.

*Old Man.* Are those the Captains? — What helmed chief is that,

Whose face is as the ravening eagle's beak?

*Second Cit.* 'T is Joab.

*Old Man.* Blest be Joab! hearts of flint,  
And hands of steel, are needful now.

*Second Cit.* See, see!

(*King DAVID and the Captains descend into the gate: the People press nearer.*)

*K. Dav.* Bring forth my harness. — Joab and Abishai,  
Lead ye the vanguard by the southern gate,  
And wait me in the plain. — My spear and harness!

*People.* (*many voices.*) O, go not forth, my lord, —  
O, go not! — Go not!

*Joab.* If I might speak?

*K. Dav.* Say on.

*Joab.* Thou know'st the time  
Is perilous, and we can jeopard nothing.  
Behold, my lord, — this city's strong for siege,  
High-towered, and watered, plentiful in corn  
Poured in by Gilead, provender, and kine.  
Let us thy servants strike the battle now,  
And if we fail, my lord shall succour us  
From out the city, or receive us here  
Where we can baffle them. But if my lord  
The King go forth and meet mischance to-day,  
What hope is left us?

*People.* (*crying tumultuously.*) No, no, no! — The  
King  
Shall not go forth. — No matter if we perish; —  
Ten thousand of us, to the King, is nought; —

They care not for us. — If the King be slain,  
Israel is lost. — My lord shall not go forth —

*Joab.* You hear the People.

*Ben.* All thy servants pray.

*K. Dav.* Well, what ye think is best, be done.

*Joab.* (*unsheathing his sword.*) Advance  
The banner.

*K. Dav.* Hear me, Joab, — hear, Abishai, —  
Ye sons of Zeruiah, mark my charge  
In presence of the People! — For my sake,  
Deal gently with him, — even Absalom, —  
Touch not his life. — What! is he not my blood?

*Joab.* God save the King! — Abishai pass thou south;  
I issue by this portal.

*K. Dav.* Benaiah!

*Ben.* My lord.

(*They retire from the hearing of the People.*)

*K. Dav.* (*after a moment's pause.*)

Thou hast a son?

*Ben.* Two valiant sons, my lord.

*K. Dav.* Thou know'st — know'st what it were —  
O, think on this — If he be taken, — shield him  
From their wild fury. — Every heart is steeled,  
And whetted to a murderous edge. — Benaiah,  
I would yield crown and life, ere see my son  
Hurried to his award. — Dire, dire for him  
Is this arbitrament —

*Ben.* Wet not your cheeks,  
My gracious lord; it doth unman my heart,  
Which I would wear, to-day, like my habergeon.

*K. Dav.* Then swear to me.

*Ben.* I swear.

*K. Dav.* Enough, enough.

*(The King resumes his station in the gate: the squadrons pass out before him.)*

## SCENE II.

*The tent of ABSALOM: ABSALOM, armed except his helmet, and HADAD.*

*Ab.* Methought I stood again, at dead of night,  
In that rich sepulchre, viewing, alone,  
The wonders of the place. My wandering eyes  
Resting upon the costly sarcophagus  
Reared in the midst, I saw therein a form  
Like David; not as he appears, — but young,  
And ruddy. In his lovely-tinctured cheek  
The vermil blood looked pure and fresh as life  
In gentle slumber. On his blooming brow  
Was bound the diadem. But, while I gazed,  
The phantasm vanished, and my father lay there,  
As he is now, his head and beard in silver,  
Sealed with the pale, fixed impress of the tomb.  
I knelt and wept. But when I thought to kiss  
My tears from off his reverend cheek, a voice  
Cried, “Impious! hold!” — and suddenly there stood  
A dreadful and refulgent form before me,  
Bearing the Tables of the Law.

*Had.* Rare phantoms!

*Ab.* It spake not, moved not, but still sternly pointed

To one command, which shone so fiercely bright  
It seared mine eyeballs. Presently, I seemed  
Transported to the desolate, wild shore  
Of Asphaltites, night, and storm, and fire  
Astounding me with horror. All alone  
I wandered ; but where'er I turned my eyes,  
On the bleak rocks, or pitchy clouds, or closed them,  
Flamed that command.

*Had.* How o'erwrought fancy coins !

*Ab.* Then suddenly I sunk down, down, methought,  
Ten thousand thousand cubits to a wide  
And travelled way, walled to the firmament  
On either side, and filled with hurrying nations ;  
Hurrying they seemed, or hurried by some spell,  
Toward a portentous adamantine gate  
Towering before us to the empyrean.  
Beside it Abraham sat, in reverend years  
And gracious majesty, snatching his Seed  
From its devouring jaws. When I approached,  
He groaned forth, " Parricide ! " — and stretched no  
aid —

To me, alone, of all his children. Then,  
What flames, what howling, fiery billows caught me,  
Like the red ocean of consuming cities,  
And shapes most horrid ; all, methought, in crowns  
Scorching as molten brass, and every eye  
Bloodshot with agony, yet none had power  
To tear them off. With frantic yells of joy,  
They crowned me too, and, with the pang, I woke.

*Had.* 'T was time, indeed. But this is empty nothing,  
And should not shake a constant mind.

*Ab.* Not shake

From its determined purpose ; but may move  
Affection, memory, with images  
Of things, loved, mourned, or feared. That heart,  
methinks,

Were of strange mould which kept no cherished print  
Of earlier, happier times, when life was fresh,  
And love and innocence made holy-day  
Within the bosom, destined soon to know  
The jar of sterner inmates ; or, that owned  
No transient sadness, when a dream, or glimpse  
Of fancy, touched past joys.

*Had.* I held your soul

Fixed with a gaze too steadfast on the sun  
Of glory, e'er to cast such looks behind.

*Ab.* And, Hadad, I had thought it strange in thee,  
But that thou never knew'st a parent's love,  
To hold so lightly what has cost me more  
To quell, than all I can confront in arms.  
Were I unmoved by such exhaustless bounty,  
Heaped, loaded on me, since my earliest thought,  
Till traitors poisoned him, I were a Fiend.

*Enter an Officer of the Guard.*

*Off.* My lord, the scouts bring tidings of the foe,  
Skirting the left-hand wood.

*Ab.* What form of march,  
What numbers show they ?

*Off.* Three squadrons come. —  
Joab, Benaiah, and the Cherethites,  
(Known by their scarlet plumage,) make the vaward, —  
The white scarfs of the Gittites next appear : —  
The third was too remote for ken.



*Ab.* What numbers ?

*Off.* Some third, or fourth of ours, my lord.

*Ab.* So bold ?

Yet that I looked for ; well I know their temper.

Saw they —— my father ?

*Off.* No, my lord,

No port that did resemble him.

*Ab.* 'T is well :

Command my chariot to the tent : go, bid

The Captain be at his pavilion straightway.

*(Exit Officer.)*

This stern defiance arms my soul again.

So David front me not, these carrion birds,

So fond to gorge, and baited to the carnage,

Shall taste their fill, to-day, by Astaroth !

Now for my daughter ; — Tamar ! ho !

*(Partly withdrawing the inner curtain of the tent.)*

*Enter TAMAR.*

— My child,

Since thou wouldst follow, I have ordered thus. —

The battle being near —

*Tam.* O ! say not so —

*Ab.* Peace ! hear me.

*Tam.* Father ! father ! on my knees

I do conjure thee —

*Ab. (sternly.)* Tamar !

*Tam.* By the love

You bear me ! by my grandsire's age ! by all

Heaven's fearful threatenings —

*Ab.* Hush ! no more of this !

Know'st thou thy father ? — Name it not again,

But hear me. Twelve brave horsemen of the guard  
Will be your escort, with our trusty Kinsman.  
Two dromedaries of the fleetest, girt  
For thee and Hadad, if the day go hard,  
Will bear ye from the danger. — Mark me, Prince ;  
Keep well aloof ; come not too near the turmoil ;  
Move with the conflict ; make the wood your skreen.  
If we speed well, I 'll meet ye here ; if not,  
Stint not your riding, heed not food nor rest  
Till Talmi's palace shelter her. — Beware !  
Nor swerve a tittle ! — And I charge thee, Hadad,  
Be not o'er curious to inspect the strife ;  
Thou canst not aid it ; and the trust thou hast  
Is more to me than victory.

*Had.* My lord,  
I yield to strong necessity, or else  
Nothing should sever me from thee to-day.

*Ab.* We need thee not. — Farewell, my daughter.  
(*Kisses her.*) Go ;  
Make ready for the saddle. — Ride with me  
Along the files, then, Hadad to thy charge.  
(*TAMAR receives her father's salute weeping,  
and retires. ABSALOM and HADAD go out  
together.*)

## SCENE III.

*The forest of Ephraim: the tents of a company of Ishmaelites: women seen under the trees: ADAH singing by a tent door.*

*Ad.* Greenly flourish, fragrant Mountain !  
Ishmael's free-born offspring know  
Every shade and gushing fountain,  
Where thy precious spices grow.

Laden with the odorous tribute,  
When the gums have ceased to fall,  
Perfumes for the Priestly censer,  
Sweets for Memphis' regal hall,

First we greet, on Zion's summit,  
Haughty Judah's lion King,  
Then to Nile's expecting borders  
Gilead's rifled treasures bring.

What, though whirlwinds sweep our deserts,  
Sands and death-clouds stalk the air ?  
Bloody treason never frights us,  
Royal mandates slay not there.

We no King, no Master worship ;  
Hagar's God alone on high :  
He the tameless spirit gave us,  
Spread the desert, hung the sky —

Ha ! Kedar, wherefore in such haste ?

*Enter a Young Ishmaelite.*

*Y. Ish.* O, Adah !

The plain is full of warriors : two great hosts  
Are rushing to the battle.

*Ad.* Heavens ! to battle !

*Enter SARAH, from the tent.*

*Sar.* What 's that ?

*Y. Ish.* Sarah, two armies are in conflict ;  
Covering the plain with horses, arms, and ensigns.  
Why, heard ye not the trumpets ?

*Women. (collecting about them.)* No — No — No.

*Sar.* But where ?

*Y. Ish.* West of the wood. While at the spring  
Filling our water-skins, we heard a blast,  
And trampling, hollow sounds, that shook the earth,  
And, pushing to the forest edge, we saw  
Squadrons approaching 'gainst a mighty host  
Camped in the plain, a countless multitude.  
O, Adah, such a glorious sight ! shields flashed,  
Spears shook, and arrows flew !

*Sar.* But who are they ?

*Y. Ish.* We know not ; but Abimilech declared  
The battle promised blood. He says the spoil  
Will more enrich us than our spices, more  
Than thrice our annual journey into Gilead.  
Dumah is with the camels ; all the rest  
Are watching to despoil the slain. I came,  
Lest ye should fear mischance.

*Ad.* Alas ! alas !

*Y. Ish.* O, could you see how dazzling bright their  
arms,  
How square and firm they move, flashing the sun  
Back from the brazen ridges, — and behold  
The warrior in the car majestic rule  
His bounding steeds, white as the noonday cloud !

*Enter TAMAR, pale, and leaning upon HADAD, followed  
by two of the Guard.*

*Had.* We crave your hospitality, good people ;  
This lady 's faint, and cannot keep the saddle.  
Grant her the shelter of your tent awhile.

*Sar.* Enter in peace.

*Ad.* Sweet lady, let me aid thee.

*(ADAH conducts TAMAR into the tent.)*

*Sar.* Belike she 's frighted ? Heard ye of the battle ?

*Had.* We have.

*Sar.* Know ye what hosts they be ?

*Had.* 'T is Israel.

*Sar.* Whom strive they with, my lord ?

*Had.* Their ancient, cruel,  
Inveterate, and indomitable foe,  
Each other.

*Sar.* Holy God !

*Had.* *(to the Guard.)* Keep all together. Are your  
comrades near ?

*Guard.* Stationed behind the tents, my lord.

*Had.* 'T is well :

Be ready to mount instantly ; and hark,  
I have a word for all of ye.

*(HADAD and Guard disappear behind the tents.)*

*Sar.* Isaac with Isaac hosts, and Ishmael reaps  
The bloody spoil ! Thus Heaven's decrees —

*Enter ADAH.*

*Ad.* O, mother !

Never did I behold such beauty ! sure,  
She must be some born Princess, all her vest  
Is twined with gold, and every loop

Is fastened with a gem. But O! such grief,  
Such sighs, it wrings my heart!

*Women.* Who can she be?

*Ad.* Her girdle, sandals, bracelets, glistening hood  
Of checklato, are wondrous; and a cord  
Of rarest rubies twice engirds her neck,  
And falls betwixt her bosom white as wool.  
But O, her lovely face was never peered.  
She looks, methinks, as Pharaoh's daughter did,  
When we beheld her pleasuring on the Nile.

*Sar.* Here comes the stranger: — noble too.

*Ad.* Question him, mother dear: — ask who they are,  
And what hath chanced to them; 't is, sure, some sad,  
Sad accident.

*Enter HADAD.*

*Sar.* How can we serve my lord,  
Or yon fair lady?

*Had.* Let us rest a space.

*Sar.* Yea, but she droops, my lord. I would we  
might

Administer: her tears and beauty touch  
My daughter nearly.

*Ad.* Ah! might not some comfort —

*Had.* Nothing: intrude not on her.

*Sar.* If we knew

Her ailment, doubt not we could balm it, Sir:  
Adah has soothed a wilder mood, believe me.

*Had.* Her friends are in the battle. Trouble not  
Anxiety ye cannot tranquillize.

*Sar.* Her friends may conquer: why doth she  
despair?

*Had.* They may, they must. But leave her, dame.  
*Y. Ish.* Here 's Dumah.

*Enter an Ishmaelite.*

*Sar.* What of the battle, Dumah? heard ye aught?

*Ish.* I durst not leave the camels long; but ere  
I came, I ran and looked, just looked.

*Had.* What saw'st thou?

*Ish.* Host mixed with host confused,  
The flash and shock of arms, shouts, groans, and peals  
Of shrilling trumpets, and a dreadful car  
Hurled by two steeds fiercer than unicorns —

*Had.* Who yielded?

*Ish.* None; but many fell.

*Had.* You know not ——— Would I could a glance  
there! ———

*TAMAR appears at the door of the tent.*

Ha! what, my love?

*Tam.* What tidings?

*Had.* Nothing decisive. Thou shalt hear the first.  
Go in, sweet: — calm your agitated spirits.

*Tam.* Ah! Hadad, thou mightst have prevented this.

*Had.* Nay, have I not assured thee how I strove,  
Entreated, kneeled to shake the Prince's purpose? —  
His will is moveless as the world's fixed centre.

*Tam.* Had I but known it! — Now, it matters not  
Who wins or loses.

*Had.* Could I play the traitor?  
Betray his secrets? — That had sundered us  
For ever, blasted all my hopes in thee. —  
Go in, love; thou shalt know whate'er betides.

(*TAMAR retires.*)

How long is it, since you beheld the field —

*Enter two Ishmaelites with spoils.*

But here 's of fresher die — Rings, daggers, girdles, —

*(Examining the booty.)*

Or friends', or foes', — they speak a common tongue. —

Bring them not near this tent. — How goes the field?

*First Ish.* The storm drives south.

*Had.* Ha! south?

*Second Ish.* We gathered these  
Where the first blows were struck.

*Had.* Saw ye a chariot?

*First Ish.* The conflict there, is like the desert whirl-  
wind, —

Darts, arrow-flights, and clashing, eager spears,  
And desperate combatants are huddled there. —  
The dust-wreaths fly. — The ramping chargers foam  
Like yesty waters, — whizzing javelins glance  
From their broad frontlets and brass poitreles, like  
Hail from a rock. Their master's buckler takes  
A tempest.

*Had.* What! the battle pushes south?

*First Ish.* We won  
These spoils where it first closed, and now it rages  
Further toward Succoth, all between thick strown  
With carcasses. All 's broken and confused.  
But, scattered through the field, you may espy,  
Far in the hostile ranks, the scarlet crests  
Of some who know their weapons well, and clear  
A bloody space around them. — Tema! ha!

*Enter third Ishmaelite, with booty.*

How goes the strife?



*Third Ish.* We left it at the direst.

*First Ish.* How fares the car ?

*Third Ish.* The horses plunge and madden,  
But cannot stir the wheels, fast wedged by dead  
And living. Round them fights a furious ring,  
Like reckless lions. All their silver manes,  
And arched necks, when they rear, show bloody red.

*Fourth Ish.* (*entering while the last speaks.*)  
They 're prostrate, — dead, I think, — I saw them fall.

*Had.* What of their lord ?

*Fourth Ish.* O'er his fallen steeds he combats :  
His sword sweeps circles that the hardiest shun.

*Had.* He cannot 'scape, then ? — Can he 'scape ?

*Fourth Ish.* For thrice  
The car, I would not stand in it.

*Third Ish.* 'T is o'er ere this : we came about, for fear  
Of skirmishers that struggled in the wood.

*Had.* (*walking aside.*)  
'T is odds he 's slain, — I know the cruel pack  
That bay him ! — So — I 'll rid me of these fellows ; —  
Alone with her, I may persuade, — If not,  
I have her, and can curb her. — All 's fulfilled ! —  
And all shall *be* fulfilled ! No more I climb  
Moriah till the frustrate covenant  
Leave her a salt-sown rock ! — What if our foe  
Recover ? — Is 't my fault ? — Have I not thrust  
The parricidal brand into his bosom ? —  
Come, what may come, — I 'll trust my dear-bought  
guerdon  
To no hereafter.

*Fourth Ish.* Lo ! — the Captain. — Lo !  
Here comes Abimilech.

*Enter ABIMILECH, and several Ishmaelites, with a quantity of rich spoil.*

*Abim. (perceiving HADAD.)* Whom have we here?

*Third Ish.* We found him when we came,

Inquiring of the battle.

*Ad. (running to ABIMILECH.)* Welcome, father.

*Abim.* What stranger 's that?

*Ad.* O, father, he hath brought

A lady brave and beauteous as a Princess.

*Had. (saluting ABIMILECH.)* Peace.

*Abim.* Peace.

*Had.* I prithee, Chief,

How fortunes, now, the field?

*Abim. (after a glance of scrutiny.)*

The eagles smell it.

*Had.* But is the battle lost?

*Abim.* Or lost, or won,

'T is stricken; and the wreck of hosts is strown  
As after whirlwinds.

*Had.* Heard ye of the Chief

Who fought from out a chariot with white steeds?

*Abim.* He 's finished.

*Had.* Ha! how know'st thou that?

*Abim.* I saw him lifeless.

*Had.* Art thou sure?

*Abim.* If to be bored with three tough darts be sure.

*Had.* Beseech ye, come this way: some friends are  
near,

To whom the news were murderous. — Then he 'scaped  
not?

*Abim.* He fled upon a mule, and disappeared,

And had escaped, I thought, though hotly followed,  
Taking the wood when met upon the plain.

But, as I crossed the forest far within,  
A trumpet roused me. Hearing earnest voices,  
I made that way, through a close brake, to spy  
The danger. Near the thicket's verge, I saw  
A concourse round an oak. Intent they seemed  
On some great spectacle. Opening anon,  
I saw him, bleeding, and transpierced with darts,  
Borne past me on their shields.

*Had.* What was his vesture ?

*Abim.* Fragments of purple hung about his shoulders.

*Had.* His arms ? his helm ?

*Abim.* Unhelmed his head, and bare ;  
His breastplate sparkled, studded, and engrailed  
With flowers of gold, pure burnish of Damascus.

*Had.* His stature —

*Abim.* Palm-like tall, of noblest aspect ;  
With ample locks that trailed upon the ground.

*Had.* Let Hades rise to meet him reverently,  
For not a Kingly Phantom there sustained  
A heart more regal !

*Abim.* Yea ; though he miscarried,  
He well deserves a valiant memory,  
And fought it like a son of David.

*Had.* Dead ! —

We must begone. Prithee, speak not of this  
Till we 're away. — First I 'll despatch yon horsemen.

(*Aside.*)

*Abim.* (*approaching the Ishmaelites.*)

Come, bustle, bustle, mates : — day wastes, — and, with  
The moon, we must be making for the Desert.

*Had. (behind the tents.)*

Mount, Sirs,—your master needs ye,—push amain,—  
Spur,—strike into the field the shortest way;—  
Where'er ye see him grapple to his side.—  
I 'll guard the Princess.—(*Returning.*) So; we 'll

further pierce

The forest, that they trace us not. At worst,  
Our dromedaries can, with ease, outstrip them.

(*Approaching SARAH'S tent.*)

Princess, we must begone.

*Tam. (appearing.)* Ha!—What?

*Had.* But this;—

Your father has retreated.

*Tam.* Is he safe?—

Alive?—unhurt?—

*Had.* So they who saw, report.

*Tam.* Thanks, gracious Heaven!

*Had.* Come, sweet,

We must obey him, now.—The conflict 's o'er;—  
Take comfort. Bid we these good friends farewell.

*Tam.* Adieu, kind-hearted Adah! Were my fate  
Less cruel, we would not part so. Keep this  
For Tamar's sake. (*Gives her a ring.*)

*Ad.* Farewell! farewell!—The stars  
Prove kinder to you.

*Sar.* Go in peace.

*Tam.* Farewell to all!

(*The Ishmaelites follow TAMAR and HADAD to  
the rear of the encampment.*)

## SCENE IV.

*A sequestered place in the wood, surrounded with thick, dark trees : a fountain, near a cave. Enter HADAD and TAMAR.*

*Tam.* But why dismount here ? — night approaches,  
Hadad : —

See, the slant sunbeams gild but the tall tree-tops,  
And evening sables all below. The wood  
Grows drear and dismal.

*Had.* We must await the Guard. — Come, sit with me  
Beside this mossy fountain : all is still here : —  
List the sweet birds nestling among the boughs ;  
All else soft silence : tumult comes not here.  
Sit by this crystal spring awhile.

*Tam.* No, no,  
I will not sit ; we must not linger here.  
My father bade us haste : we disobey,  
And risk his anger. — Keep your hands from me.

*Had.* But whither shall we fly ?

*Tam.* Where he commanded.

*Had.* To vassal Geshur ! — Who can there protect  
us ?

Or in Damascus' tributary walls ? ——  
Hear me, sweet Princess, bright star of my being,  
Fly, fly with me beyond this wretched scene  
Of civil strife, and never-ending discord,  
To realms of quietness, where we may dwell  
In lasting peace.

*Tam.* What mean'st thou?

*Had.* Look on Israel

Deluged in blood, — the Royal House divided, —

The Tribes in faction, — peace for ever fled!

What harbour here for love? O, fly with me:

I will conduct thee to a brighter sphere.

*Tam.* Forsake my country? — father? — Never!

*Had.* Then Hadad's lost, and all our cherished hopes  
A faithless dream.

*Tam.* These sad clouds may disperse.

*Had.* Thou know'st not — Ah! — I would have  
spared that pang —

*Tam.* Ha!

*Had.* Hadad can never tread these bounds again,  
Deemed (O, how falsely!) treason's foul abettor,  
Since he is gone who only could attest  
His spotless innocence.

*Tam.* (*in alarm.*) What mean'st thou?

*Had.* Later witnesses report —  
Alas! —

*Tam.* My father? — Gracious Heaven! —  
Mean'st thou my father? —

*Had.* Dearest Tamar, — Israel's Hope —  
Sleeps with the valiant of the years of old.

(*TAMAR, with a convulsed cry, bursts into tears:*

*HADAD seems to weep.*)

The bond is rent that knit thee to thy country.

Thy father's murderers triumph. Turn not there,

To see their mockery. Let us retire,

And, piously, on some far, peaceful shore,

With mingled tears embalm his memory.

*Tam.* (*clasping her hands.*) Am I an orphan?

*Had.* Nay, much-loved Princess, not while this  
Fond heart —

*Tam.* Misguided father! — Hadst thou but listened —  
Hadst thou believed —

*Had.* But now, what choice is left?  
What refuge hast thou but thy faithful Hadad?

*Tam.* One — stricken — hoary head remains.

*Had.* The slayer of thy parent! — Wouldst thou go  
Where obloquy and shame and curses load him?  
Hear him called rebel?

*Tam.* All is expiated now.

*Had.* Tamar, — wilt thou forsake me.

*Tam.* I must go to David.

*Had.* (*aside.*) Cursed thought! —  
Think of your lot, — neglect, reproach, and scorn,  
For who will wed a traitor's offspring? All  
The proud will slight thee, as a blasted thing.

*Tam.* O, wherefore this to me? —  
Conduct me hence — Nay, instantly.

*Had.* (*in an altered tone.*) Hold! hold!  
For thou must hear. — If deaf to love, thou 'rt not  
To fearful ecstasy.

(*TAMAR startled : — he proceeds, but agitated  
and irresolute.*)

—— Confide in me —

I can transport thee — O, to a paradise,  
To which this Canaan is a darksome span; —  
Beings shall welcome — serve thee — lovely as An-  
gels; —  
The Elemental Powers shall stoop; — the Sea

Disclose her wonders, and receive thy feet  
Into her sapphire chambers ; — orb'd clouds  
Shall chariot thee from zone to zone, while earth,  
A dwindled islet, floats beneath thee ; — every  
Season and clime shall blend for thee the garland. —  
The abyss of Time shall cast its secrets, — ere  
The Flood marred primal nature, — ere this Orb  
Stood in her station ! Thou shalt know the stars,  
The houses of Eternity, their names,  
Their courses, destiny, — all marvels high.

*Tam.* Talk not so madly.

*Had. (vehemently.)* Speak — answer —  
Wilt thou be mine, if mistress of them all ?

*Tam.* Thy mien appals me ; — I know not what I  
fear ; —

Thou wouldst not wrong me, — reft, and fatherless, —  
Confided to thee as a sacred trust —

*Had. (haughtily.)* My power  
Is questioned. Whom dost thou imagine me ?

*Tam.* Indeed, surpassed by nothing human.

*Had.* Bah !

*Tam.* O, Hadad, Hadad, what unhallowed thought  
So ruffles and transforms thee ?

*Had.* Still, still,  
Thou call'st me Hadad, — boy, worm, heritor  
Of a poor, vanquished, tributary King ! —  
Then *know* me.

*Tam.* Seraphs hover round me !

*Had.* Woman ! — (*Struggling, as with conflicting  
emotions.*)

What thou so dotest on — this form — was Hadad's —



But I — the Spirit — I, who speak through these  
Clay lips, and glimmer through these eyes, —  
Have challenged fellowship, equality,  
With Deathless Ones, — prescient Intelligences, —  
Who scorn Man and his molehill, and esteem  
The outgoing of the morning, yesterday ! —  
I, who commune with thee, have dared, proved, suffered,  
In life — in death — and in *that* state whose bale  
Is death's first issue ! I could freeze thy blood  
With mysteries too terrible — of Hades ! —  
Not there immured, for by my art I 'scaped  
Those confines, and with Beings dwelt of bright  
Unbodied essence. — Canst thou *now* conceive  
The love that could persuade me to these fetters ? —  
Abandoning my power — I, who could touch  
The firmament, and plunge to darkest Sheol,  
Bask in the sun's orb, fathom the green sea,  
Even while I speak it — here to root and grow  
In earth again, a mortal, abject thing,  
To win and to enjoy thy love.

*Tam.* (*in a low voice of supplication.*) Heaven !  
Heaven !

Forsake me not !

*Had.* First, in the city's crowded gate I saw thee,  
The memorable day thou camest from Geshur,  
A vermil blossom by thy father's side,  
Hailing Jerusalem with smiles and tears.  
Then, then I loved thee, — tender as thou wert ; —  
I hung invisibly about thy steps —  
About thy bed, — I glided in thy dreams, —  
Filled them with sweet, voluptuous forms and phantoms,

And watched thy glowing cheek and heaving bosom,  
While my bright visions stirred thy fancy. Happy  
Till that cursed Syrian, fresher than Adonis,  
Became thy inmate. No seducing dream,  
Illusion, art of mine, could reach thee more.  
Then, first, I knew agonies, scorpions, fire! —  
But mark, — I harmed him not, — ensnared him not,  
Unlocked life's secret by no subtle spell.  
But mourning in a mountain solitude,  
Neighbouring Jerusalem, my luckless love  
And lowering destiny, your father's train  
Came forth to hunt. The Syrian from the rest  
Severing in keen pursuit, fell in with Outlaws  
Who followed, and with bloody daggers slew him,  
Even by the fountain where I mused unseen.

*Tam. (clasping her forehead.) —*

O, grace! — O, pity! —

*Had.* Thou know'st the time — remember'st well —  
't was night,

Ere he returned, — ere *I* returned, — for I,  
From that day forth, have worn these lineaments.

*Tam.* Confusion! —

*Had.* While his quivering limbs  
Pressed the green sod, while pitying I surveyed  
His matchless beauty, nobly stern in death,  
And thought how dear those features were to thee,  
I dared the penalty; — for thy sake dared  
Death, prison-house, and penal consequence,  
Denounced on the offence: — I linked myself  
To Hadad's form, and life's infirmities,  
My recompense, my only recompense,  
Thy love.

*Tam.* Sorcerer ! Fiend ! — 't is falsehood all —  
Thou slew'st him.

*Had.* Ha ! are there not other means  
To free the spirit ? — Had I marred him thus ?

*(Draws aside his vesture, and displays two  
bleeding stabs upon his breast.)*

*Tam.* *(covering her face.)* O ! Powers of Heaven !

*Had.* Immedicable wounds, that thrill, and throb  
Hourly as with the mortal steel, and gush  
Fresh blood, when stronger passions shake my frame.  
No art can heal them, and no balm assuage. —  
O, if this sight constrain the tear of pity,  
How wouldst thou live to listen the dire torments,  
Must loose me from this flesh, — too deep to tell, —  
To which your death by poison, steel, or rack,  
Is a sweet noontide slumber.

*Tam.* Wretched being !

*Had.* Dost thou not pity me ?

*Tam.* Alas ! alas !

If 't be not guilt, — for thou art capable  
Of misery past thought.

*Had.* I love thee : — 't is my *only* joy : —  
I 've paid to win thy love a sumless price : —  
Canst thou deny it me ? *(Approaching her.)*

*Tam.* Avoid me — leave me ! —

I sin, in talking with thee. — Pardon, Heaven !  
I know not what I do.

*Had.* Weep not,  
Nor fear, sweet Princess : I would make thee happy,  
Happier than mortal. Only bid me sprinkle  
Three crystal drops of this pure spring upon thee,

And thou shalt live, unfading, tracts of years,  
And bloom, when all who stand to-day on earth,  
Are shapeless dust. (*Scoops water from the fountain.*)

*Tam.* (*recoiling.*)

Avaunt! — approach me not! —

Jehovah shelter me! — O, righteous Prophet!

Had I obeyed thee — guilty and undone!

*Had.* Why call'st thou on that name so oft, nor  
know'st

Thyself abandoned? Hopest thou to escape

*His* wrath, who visits on the children's head

The father's guilt? Thy sire has angered him,

And thou must suffer. — Take the good I offer:

Thou hazardest no evil, and securest

Almost immortal bliss. — Wilt thou?

*Tam.* No! — No! — No!

*Had.* Strange obduracy! Thou art mine, thou  
seest: —

Resigned to me in this vast wilderness, —

Night, solitude, and silence all around, —

With none to friend or help thee; — yet thou turnest

From happiness beyond the lot of mortal,

Beauty unfading, knowledge like the Angels',

Glory, and sovereignty, and length of days —

Thine eye relents, — thus, let me clasp a goddess!

*Tam.* (*springing backward.*)

Heart, hold thou firm! God look on me,

For I am sore beset! — If 't is my crime

Not to have abhorred thee utterly, and sealed

My ears like adamant, nor ventured, once,

Exchange a thought, — 't was difficult, alas!

Seeing that form, and listening to a tongue  
Employed so oft in noblest eloquence,  
To realize thee foul, and reprobate, —  
Abandoned, — hating God, — cruelly bent  
To drag a frail, bereaved, unhappy creature,  
Down to thy own dark mansion-house of pain.  
But now I know thee, I abjure thee, — hate thee,  
More than unwittingly I loved. To God  
I cleave, — on God I call —

*Had. (with demoniac violence.)* No more, — we 'll  
argue after. — Thou, at least,  
Shalt never bear the Incarnate Foe we fear.

*Tam.* Father! — Most High! — By every name! —  
O, snatch me!

Flame round me! — O! for Jacob's — David's sake! —  
*(He drags her shrieking into the cavern; at the  
same moment a trumpet and voices heard in  
the wood.)*

*First Voice.* This way, this way.

*Second Voice.* There stand their dromedaries.

*Third Voice.* It issues from the cave.

*Enter BENAIAH hastily, followed by a party of Cherethites.*

*Ben.* I know his beast —  
Stand from the gorge! — Give light and weapon room!  
Some stout hearts follow me!

*(Enters the cavern, sword in hand, followed by  
several of the band: the rest gather round.)*

*First Cher.* Hark! hark! — What dire, unnatural  
yell was that? *(They listen.)*

Some mortal conflict rages. — Heavenly Powers !  
What curses, howling, horrid blasphemy !

*Second Cher.* 'T is like Gehenna !

*Third Cher.* O, venture not — Keep back —  
Accursed Spirits consort in these caves,  
Who craftily entice men in, and there  
Force them to kneel at their ensnaring altars.

*Second Cher.* But should we leave our lord in peril ?

*First Cher.* No,  
By Heaven ! 'Let 's in, and stand by him.

*(As others are entering, a Cherethite rushes out, pale and terrified.)*

*Cherethites.* What now ? —  
What violence is doing ? — Speak — Why stares  
Your hair ? —

*Cherethite.* O, go not — 't is too terrible —

*Other Cherethites.* What saw ye ? — Speak ! —

*Cherethite.* One like the Cherubim, —  
Dreadfully glistening, — winged, and dazzling bright  
As lightning ; — shooting from his bickering eyeballs  
Sparkles like arrows. — All the cave 's a-blaze  
With red effulgence ! — Foaming on the ground,  
A howling, withering, ghast, demoniac shape  
Curses, and gnashes, in death's agony.

*Third Cher.* The Prophets keep us !

*Cherethite.* Nothing kin to earth  
E'er looked such serpent rage, or battled so  
With death's strong pangs.

*(They all start.)*

*Fourth Cher.* What sound was that ?

*Second Cher.* It seemed a rush of wind from out the cave.

*First Cher.* 'T was passing wings.

*Third Cher.* I felt it; and methinks

A sudden sweetness fills the air around us.

*First Cher.* Ambrosial. It betokens some blest Presence.

*Second Cher.* They come, they come.

*(Enter two of the band, dragging the body of HADAD from the cavern, which they drop, and recoil from.)*

*First Cher.* What hideous monster is it?

*Second Cher.* Nothing human:

Look how 't is blasted.

*Third Cher.* What a hellish glare

Is glazed upon those starting eyeballs!

*Second Cher.* Damned.

*Enter BENAIAH and others from the cavern, bearing TAMAR, whom they place upon the turf by the spring.*

*Ben.* 'T is she, indeed, the Princess, but not dead.

The color 's in her cheek, and see, she breathes.

*(Sprinkles water in her face.)*

*Tam.* *(opening her eyes aghast.)*

No! — No! — No! —

*Ben.* Look up, sweet lady: — be not so affrighted: —

We are thy friends, — the servants of the King; —

I am Benaiah, — these are David's soldiers —

*Tam.* O, take me! — save me! —

*(Sinks back.)*

*Ben.* Take courage, Princess,— Heaven hath rescued thee —

Behold! — armed friends are round thee, — God is nigh. —

*(To his followers.)*

Sound the recall, — collect more strength about us ; —

And seize a mule, if any browse the glade. —

Gently — Undo her girdle — She 'll revive.

*(Trumpet sounds : some of the Cherethites disperse through the wood. BENAIAH signs to the rest, who gather round him.)*

Comrades ! yon grisly thing, that lies there seared,

Is Hadad. He could blear our eyes, but not

The great All-seeing. Strictly did I heed

The Prophet's dark suggestions to the King,

Imparted as they wayfared side by side,

The night before we entered Mahanaim ;

Oft iterated, as when cruel doubts

Afflict us. But, in the midmost watch last night,

He stood beside my couch, — perplexed, perturbed ; —

Visions, he said, all pointing to the Syrian

And this young Princess, vexed and baffled him,

Shifting and indistinct as clouds or smoke,

But all portentous. Some catastrophe

He deemed at hand, thus darkly intimated ;

And bade me, in the Holy Name, not spare,

If this day's battle brought him to my steel,

And, haply, I should find him vulnerable.

Either, said he, some Minister of Evil

Has armed that Syrian with unearthly arts,



Or else a Spirit has assumed his likeness.  
Strange signs, strange intimations he recounted,  
And said a dream had warned him to beware  
Of ASMODAI, for that seductive Demon  
Was plotting in the midst of Israel.

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## NOTES.

### NOTE I.

— or forged, more like,  
*By dark Ahithophel.* — p. 122.

Ahithophel appears to have been the grandfather of Bathsheba. His enmity to David is imputed by the Jews to resentment on her account.

### NOTE II.

*Above, about, beneath ; earth, sea, and air ;  
Their habitations various as their minds,  
Employments, and desires.* — p. 136.

“The fall of Angels, therefore, was pride. Since their fall, their practices have been the clean contrary unto those before mentioned ; for being dispersed, some in the air, some in the earth, some amongst the minerals, dens, and caves that are under the earth, they have by all means labored to effect an universal rebellion against the laws, and as far as in them lieth, utter destruction of the works of God.” — HOOKER, Eccles. Polity, b. 1, sec. 4.

### NOTE III.

— but in the chambers of this rock  
*Are treasures which the empires of the earth,  
United, cannot equal.* — p. 140.

Josephus, speaking of the burial of David, observes : “He had great and immense wealth buried with him, the vastness

of which may be easily conjectured at by what I shall now say ; for, a thousand and three hundred years afterwards, Hyrcanus the High Priest, when he was besieged by Antiochus that was called the Pious, the son of Demetrius, and was desirous of giving him money to get him to raise the siege, and draw off his army ; and having no other method of compassing the money, opened one room of David's sepulchre, and took out three thousand talents, and gave part of that sum to Antiochus, and by this means caused the siege to be raised, as we have informed the reader elsewhere. Nay, after him, and that many years, Herod the King opened another room, and took away a great deal of money ; and yet neither of them came at the coffins of the Kings themselves." — *Antiq. of the Jews*, b. 7, ch. 15.

The riches left by David, according to the common computation, exceeded eight hundred millions sterling.

#### NOTE IV.

*Where goes Mephibosheth at this dusk hour ?* — p. 149.

That David strongly suspected Mephibosheth of some participation in the rebellion, is apparent from his behaviour to Ziba. When Mephibosheth meets the King, on his return to Jerusalem, with external signs of the deepest sorrow for his misfortunes, and protests that the accusations of his servant are false and slanderous ; David, instead of indignantly annulling his gift to Ziba of Mephibosheth's possessions, and inflicting the punishment he would have merited, had his master's story been believed, answers : " Why speakest thou any more of thy matters ? I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land." — See also JOSEPHUS : Translator's note, b. 8, ch. 11.

## NOTE V.

— *Thou know'st 't is held by righteous men,  
That Heaven intrusts us all to Holy Watchers.*" — p. 160.

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their Angels do always behold the face of my Father, which is in heaven." — MATT. xviii. 10.

"Are they not all ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister for them who should be heirs of salvation?" — HEBREWS, i. 14.

"The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." — PSALM xxxiv. 7.

The Jews universally believed in Guardian Angels.

## NOTE VI.

— *Fiends walk the Earth.* — p. 161.

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." — JOB, i. 7.

## NOTE VII.

*Hard by the Wood of Ephraim.* — p. 184.

The Wood of Ephraim was near the city of Mahanaim in the country of Gilead, in the tribe of Gad. It received this appellation from a slaughter of the Ephraimites by Jephtha, which happened there.



**PERCY'S MASQUE,**

**A DRAMA,**

**IN FIVE ACTS.**



## INTRODUCTION.

HENRY PERCY, the son of Hotspur, found himself, when he emerged from childhood, bereft of friends, stripped of the possessions of his ancestors, and subsisting, in exile, upon the bounty of strangers.

On the rupture of his family with Henry the Fourth, whom they had been instrumental in elevating to the throne, leaguings with Glendour and the Earl of Douglas, they published it as their intention to transfer the crown to Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March. This nobleman was the great-grandson of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, the third son of Edward the Third; and, besides representing an elder branch of the family than that from which Henry sprung, had been acknowledged by Richard the Second as his successor. The issue of their enterprise was the well-known battle of Shrewsbury. The Earl of Northumberland, whom accident had detained from the engagement, and whose power was still formidable, received pardon. Stung, however, by the loss of his son and brother, he, in company with Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York, and Thomas Mowbray,



Earl Marshal, appeared, two years afterwards, again in arms. Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, who was allied, by marriage, to Henry, and was devoted to his cause, broke this combination by stratagem; took York and Mowbray prisoners on Shipton-Moor, and delivered them into his master's hands, at the castle of Pontefract, where, after a summary trial, they suffered death. Northumberland, accompanied by his faithful friend, Lord Bardolph, and bearing with him his young grandson, retired into Scotland. His estates were confiscated, and bestowed on different adherents of the King. Failing in an application for aid to the Scottish Court, and in their attempts to purchase it in Wales, France, and Flanders, through which they wandered together, these Noblemen came to the resolution of making a third effort to dethrone Bolingbroke, with no other means than those assured by their great personal influence and popularity in the North of England. Thither they accordingly returned, and were, soon after, both slain in the battle of Bramham-Moor. "So that now," says Holinshed, "the prophesie was fulfilled which gaue an inkling of this heauie hap long before;" — "For this Earle was the stocke, and maine root of all that were left aliue called by the name of Persie, and of manie more by diuers slaughters despatched. For whose misfortune the People were not a little sorrie, making report of the gentleman's valiantnesse, renowne, and honour, and applieng unto him certeine lamentable verses out of Lucane," &c.

Respecting his grandson, the same author remarks : " Henrie Persie, then but a child, sonne to the Lord Henrie Persie surnamed Hotspur, after his father's deceasse, that was slaine at Shrewesburie field, was conuied into Scotland, and there left by his Grandfather." He was educated at the Court of the Regent, Robert Stuart, Duke of Albany ; where he remained till about the date of the following scenes.\*

\* The subject was suggested by the Ballad at the close of the second volume, which will serve to explain some allusions in the Drama. Boswell informs us, that its author, Thomas Percy, Bishop of Dromore, was the heir male of the ancient Earls of Northumberland.



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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NEVILLE, *Earl of Westmoreland and Northumberland.*

ARTHUR, *his Huntsman.*

DOUGLAS, *Heir of the House of Douglas.*

BERTRAM,	}	<i>Gentlemen of Northumberland.</i>
MOUNTFORT,		
BARDOLPH,		
FITZHUGH,		

KING HENRY THE FIFTH, *and Nobles of his Retinue.*

ROOK, *a Groom of Westmoreland's.*

LADY WESTMORELAND.

ELINOR, *their Daughter.*

FLORENCE, *Cousin of Elinor, and Guest at Warkworth.*

Knights, Vassals, &c.

SCENE. *Warkworth Castle, in Northumberland.*



# PERCY'S MASQUE.

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## ACT I.

SCENE I. *A terrace of the Castle, overlooking a lawn and woods.* ELINOR alone. *Enter FLORENCE.*

*Flor.* She stood, majestic, 'mid her waving woods,  
Like Dian musing on her hill of cedars,  
Or that famed Princess, whom the grey-eyed dawn  
Found lingering on the beach beneath proud Carthage,  
Pensive and pale, her sandals wet with sea-foam,  
And her dark tresses with the tears of night,  
Accusing Heaven, and looking lorn as thou dost !

*El.* Good morrow, cousin.

*Flor.* Prithee, pretty maid,  
Why creep'st thou slyly from my side, at dawn,  
Day after day, up to this lonely platform ?

*El.* Look forth : let universal nature speak.  
See yonder, how the Cheviot summits glow ;  
What fiery colors deck the glistening wood ;  
How volumed, dense, and white, the river mist  
Winds down the gleaming vale !

*Flor.* Solve me, sweet coz, —

What stirs thy pensive breast to deeper musing  
Than all the hues and melodies of nature ?  
Than moonlight walks on wild Northumbrian hills,  
Than hoarse waves booming to the ocean shore,  
Autumn's sear leaves, sad fields, and farewell song,  
Or converse with the starry spheres ? — Come, solve  
me.

*El.* Pish ! leave such senseless rhapsody.

*Flor.* A horn !

A simple, merry, huntsman's horn ! — How sweet,  
From this high terrace to o'erlook the courts,  
When, mustering there, the leaders of the chase  
Marshal their bands, caparison their steeds,  
Vault to their seats, halloo, and, dashing out,

Make hill and greenwood, high and low,  
Shrill to the merry bugle O !

*El.* What mean'st thou, Florence ?

*Flor.*

His vest was green,  
His feather blue,  
His glance was keen,  
His arrow true, —

And hill and greenwood, high and low,  
Shrilled to his merry bugle O !

*El.* In simpler words, — the friend who knows me best,  
To whom my thoughts, even from our childish years,  
Have been transparent as the crystal waters,  
Believes me (else, why urge this tedious jest ?)  
Enamoured of a hind, my father's vassal !

*Flor.* O, spare me ! frown not on my harmless muse.  
I did but sport : forgive me, Elinor.  
Yet, would I knew what preys upon your cheek,

Shrouds you in gloom, and locks me from your bosom.  
When Raby's towers from morn till midnight rang  
With dance, masque, pageant, minstrelsy, and song,  
Our lives seemed sweetest pastime. Not a lark  
Rose from her nest more gayly to the skies  
Than we from slumber : joy was all our theme.  
Silence and melancholy now usurp —

*El.* What need to search my heart ? Thou know'st  
it thine.

*Flor.* Does Elinor unkindly cast me out  
From sympathy in sorrow, like a stranger ?

*El.* Cease, Florence, cease ; I have not yet com-  
plained,  
Nor ever will, while bounteous Heaven showers down  
Blessings unnumbered on my worthless head.  
Complain ! By what prerogative am I  
The darling offspring of a noble house ?  
Born in this land of heroes ? Graced in all things ?  
Who gave those tender parents, and preserves ?  
Who stretched a canopy above my bed,  
And steeps my eyelids in the dew of slumber,  
While many an one no worse than I — No, no,  
If, spite of me, my thankless heart repine  
Because some fancied good swells not the store,  
Ne'er will I utter such rebellious murmurs.

*Flor.* Seems it rebellion to thee, Elinor,  
To bathe the wounds which Providence inflicts  
In friendship's tears ?

*El.* As for that youth — few words  
Will sum his story. Three months since, surprised  
By a wild night, while journeying near these walls,



He begged a shelter. Voice, or face, or mien, —  
Fate willed it, — touched my sire, who questioned him.  
Fortune, he said, smiled fairly at his birth ;  
But fatal feuds, mischances long to tell,  
Robbed him of friends and substance while a child,  
And, ever since, his adverse fate had frowned.  
Cheered by kind looks and courtesy, he asked  
Among the hunting-train some humble post.  
Rare talents in the art so cherished here  
Had won him rank and favor, ere his arm,  
Blessed be Heaven, preserved my life and honor.

*Flor.* Thy life —

*El.* Have I not told thee ? Strange neglect ! —  
O, Florence, hear. — A balmy eventide  
Allured me, with a damsel, down the vale.  
Beguiled with talk, and roving heedless, night  
O'ertook us. Hurrying through the wood, just where  
That ancient ash o'erspreads the way, a band  
Of prowling Scots, moss-troopers from the wild,  
Rushed from a covert, captive seized us —

*Flor.* Jesu !

*El.* Bound us upon their horses, and amain  
Spurred for the Border. Long our dangerous course  
O'er hills and moors, by lonely robber paths,  
We held in darkness, guided by the stars  
And fitful lustre of the northern light.  
At last, (the moon now broad above the fells,)  
Crossing a glen, they halted in a brook,  
Full in the beam, to counsel, and to breathe  
Their o'erspent steeds. Four huntsmen, 'midst the parle,  
Reined up beside us. Judge what trembling seized me,

When on their coats my father's crest I saw !  
Think — in that wild untrodden solitude  
To find brave Arthur by my side ! Speech, breath  
Forsook me. Agnes shrieked. Then, Florence, then —  
But my brain reeled ; his desperate charge I saw not.  
I found myself upon the moonlight bank  
Sustained by Agnes ; felt upon my cheek  
The night-breeze freshened by the gushing rill  
Which Arthur from his basnet sprinkled o'er me.  
No hostile sound disturbed us ; tranquil, pale,  
And sweet all seemed, till on the runnel's brink,  
Close at my feet, I spied two grim marauders  
Mixing their life-blood with the bubbling stream.  
That night he gave me to my mother's arms ;  
And such a night ! — such agonies of joy  
I hope no more to see. — To this poor youth,  
Whose blood redeemed me, ingrate shall I prove ?

*Flor.* Forbid it gratitude —

*El.* But if a lighter thought — remember, Florence,  
Mine is the stock of Lancaster, the blood  
Whose pure, proud current feeds the hearts of Princes.  
(*Exit.*)

*Flor.* Four days ! — and not a whisper of this tale, —  
That should have flown to meet me on the way,  
Leaped from her eyes, mixed with the welcome-kiss,  
And dwelt the favored theme upon her tongue !  
Her mother's silence, too ! — ay, that ! — But why —  
What doth he here ? haunting about her steps,  
And practising upon her noble nature ? —  
Alas ! if Elinor, — the gentle, high-souled, —  
This claims my care, and nicest observation.

(*Exit.*)

## SCENE II.

*A court of the Castle. — Enter WESTMORELAND, meeting ARTHUR, with a falcon.*

*West.* How flies she, Arthur?

*Ar.* Faithful to the lure,  
My lord, and bold upon the wing as eagles.

*West.* Thank my Lord Marshal with the Tangier barb.  
See him caparisoned, and led by Hubert.  
What tidings from the North?

*Ar.* Berwick is free.  
The Borderers stole away on Michael's eve.

*West.* A raid of Murray's: so I wrote the King.  
Who brought the news?

*Ar.* The Regent's courier passed, at dawn,  
For London.

*West.* Spoke you with him?

*Ar.* Yes, my lord.

*West.* What brings he else?

*Ar.* Nothing of any moment.  
Rothsay is dead, and Percy fled from court.

*West.* Percy!

*Ar.* The Hotspur's son.

*West.* Fled! — Whither?

*Ar.* Westward,  
Some say, with young Lord Douglas to the Isles;  
Though others think to France.

*West.* Degenerate stripling! — Fled! — How long ago?

*Ar.* Two months, my lord, he doth report, and more.

*West.* If but a spark — (*Pausing*) — No fear, — one  
night on straw

Would send him with a quartan home to nurse.

But this curled minion's father, long ago,

Had shook my gates with Scotland at his back ;

Or, baffled there, like some grey Palmer knocked,

With scrip, and scallop, craving charity,

Harper, or Beadsman, muttering for the damned,

And drenched our hospitable hearths with blood.

Rough Hotspur, sooner than in exile languish,

Ay, rather, if the spleen of fight were on,

Unarmed would mount, and, with a frail ash spear,

Tilt with the Fiend, than speak in courtesy.

*Ar.* What thinks my lord? Were this fierce chief  
alive,

Or any valiant scion of his stock,

Would Henry, on submission at his throne,

Restore their honors ?

*West.* Restore ! — Northumberland is mine : who  
takes

Must win it. Percy lorded o'er the North

Too proudly, and is sunk to rise no more.

The Sire and the Son set Bolingbroke aloft,

Meaning to rule the King they made ; but soon

Finding a check on their omnipotence,

Their vengeful arms they turned ; denounced his ruin ;

Drew half the kingdom to revolt, and clave,

Almost, the diadem.

*Ar.* Audacious traitors !

*West.* Their fortune hit the planetary hour

They, erring, thought, and sun and moon must bow,  
With humble adoration, to the Star  
Of their nativity. And, had not I  
Outwitted York, dispersed his power, and seized  
Mowbray and him, we now had drudged for bread,  
Cursing the pittance doled by Mortimer ;  
While grey-beard Percy gored us with his rule,  
Counting each drop expiatory blood  
For Hotspur's death.

*Ar.* And does my lord fear aught from Hotspur's  
son ?

*West.* The Piper ? Lady Regent's toilet-man ?  
Whose soul, in travail of a sonnet, faints,  
Seven times a day, entranced upon a lute ?  
Alack ! down-beds, perfumes, carpets, and ladies,  
He covets more than cold night-watches, sheathed  
In arms, steel pillows, and the smell of war.

*Ar.* Strange tales of him the crones and Gypsies tell.  
Some say the noble babe was stolen by Fairies,  
Who left a changeling imp : some, that Night-hags  
Blasted the cradle —

*West.* Would the name were blasted,  
Rased and forgot ! Rebellion 's in their ashes,  
And taints the air that blows upon my vassals.  
Fools cry, A miracle ! when nature sports.  
'T was thus when Edward's lion-mettled stock  
To Richard shrunk. The Scottish Regent strove  
To rear him up a scourge and thorn to me ;  
Schooled him in every noble exercise,  
And sought the promise of his youth to prove,  
For, in his boyhood, sparks like Percy shone ;

But 't was a bootless toil. — Look to the steed.

(*Exit.*)

*Ar.* Buried in the dear ashes thou dishonorest,  
That spark, proud Westmoreland, thou 'lt find  
Alive for fatal mischief. Blest delusion!  
For once, thank Heaven, my better star prevails.

(*Exit.*)

## ACT II.

SCENE I. *A high-wood walk in a park. The towers of the Castle seen over the trees.*

*Enter ARTHUR.*

*Ar.* Here let me pause, and breathe awhile, and wipe  
These servile drops from off my burning brow.  
Amidst these venerable trees, the air  
Seems hallowed by the breath of other times. —  
Companions of my Fathers ! ye have marked  
Their generations pass. Your giant arms  
Shadowed their youth, and proudly canopied  
Their silver hairs, when, ripe in years and glory,  
These walks they trod to meditate on Heaven.  
What warlike pageants have ye seen ! what trains  
Of captives, and what heaps of spoil ! what pomp,  
When the victorious Chief, war's tempest o'er,  
In Warkworth's bowers unbound his panoply !  
What floods of splendor, bursts of jocund din,  
Startled the slumbering tenants of these shades,  
When night awoke the tumult of the feast,  
The song of damsels, and the sweet-toned lyre !  
Then, princely Percy reigned amidst his halls,  
Champion, and Judge, and Father of the North.  
O, days of ancient grandeur ! are ye gone ?  
For ever gone ? Do these same scenes behold  
His offspring here the hireling of a foe ?  
O, that I knew my fate ! that I could read  
The destiny which Heaven has marked for me !

*Enter a Forester.*

*For.* A benison upon thee, gentle huntsman !  
Whose towers are these that overlook the wood ?

*Ar.* Earl Westmoreland's.

*For.* The Neville's towers I seek.  
By dreams I learn, and prophecies most strange,  
A noble youth lurks here, whose horoscope  
Declares him fated to amazing deeds.

*Ar. (starting back.)* Douglas ! —

*Doug.* Now do I clasp thee, Percy ; and I swear  
By my dear soul, and by the blood of Douglas,  
Linked to thy side through every chance, I go,  
Till here thou rulest, or death and night end all.

*Per.* Amazement ! Whence ? — or how ? —

*Doug.* And didst thou think  
Thus to elude me ?

*Per.* Answer how thou found'st me.  
What miracle directed here thy steps ?

*Doug.* Where should I look for thee but in the post  
Where birth, fame, fortune, wrongs, and honor call  
thee ?

Returning from the Isles, I found thee gone.  
Awhile in doubt, each circumstance I weighed :  
Thy difficulties, wrongs, and daring spirit ;  
The gay, delusive show so long maintained  
To lull observers ; then set forth, resolved  
Never to enter more my native towers  
Till I had found, and searched thee to the soul.

*Per.* Still must I wonder ; for so dark a cloud —

*Doug.* O, deeper than thou think'st I've read thy  
heart.



A gilded insect to the world you seemed ;  
The fashion's idol ; person, pen, and lyre,  
The soft devoted darling of the Fair.  
By slow degrees I found Herculean nerve  
Hid in thy tuneful arm ; that hunger, thirst,  
The sultry chase, the bleakest mountain-bed,  
The dark, rough winter torrent, were to thee  
But pastime ; more were courted than repose.  
To others, your discourse still wild and vain,  
To me, when none else heard thee, seemed the voice  
Of heavenly oracles.

*Per.* O, partial friendship.

*Doug.* Yet had I never guessed your brooded purpose.

Rememberest thou the Regent's Masque ? the birth-night ?

*Per.* Well.

*Doug.* That night you glittered through the crowded halls,

Gay, and capricious as a sprite of air.

Apollo rapt us when you touched the lyre ;

Cupid fanned odors from your purple wings ;

Or Mercury amused with magic wand,

Mocking our senses with your feathered heel.

In every fancy, shape, and hue you moved,

The admiration, pity, theme of all. —

One bed received us. Soon, your moaning voice

Disturbed me. Dreaming heavily, you groaned,

“ O, Percy ! Percy ! Hotspur ! O, my father !

Upbraid me not ! hide, hide those ghastly wounds !

Usurper ! Traitor ! thou shalt feel me ! ”

*Per.* No !

*Doug.* 'T is true ; — and more than I can now remember.

*Per.* Yet never speak of it ?

*Doug.* Inly I burned ;

But honor, pride forbade. Pilfer from dreams !

Thou knew'st the ear, arm, life of Douglas, thine —

*Per.* And long ago I had disclosed to thee

My troubled bosom, but my enterprise

So rife with peril seemed, — to hearts less touched,

So hopeless ! Knowing thy impetuous soul,

How could I justify the deed to Heaven,

How to thine aged sire ? Armed proof I stand,

To fate : come what will come, the wide earth bears

No heart of kindred blood to mourn my fall.

*Doug.* The heart of Douglas beats not with thy blood,

But never will I trust in mercy more,

In justice, truth, or heaven, if it forsake thee.

*Per.* Douglas, thy friendship is my choicest treasure,

Has been a radiant star on my dark way ;

And never did I doubt thy zeal to serve me.

Lend, now, a patient ear. — While with my doom,

Alone, I strive, no dread or doubt distracts me.

No precious fate with mine involved, my heart

Is fearless, firm my step. Exposing thee,

The adamant buckler falls, and leaves me,

Naked and trembling, to a double death.

*Doug.* Thou lovest me not.

*Per.* Let Heaven be witness there ! —

The thought of bringing down thy father's hairs

With sorrow to the grave, would weigh like guilt,  
Palsy my courage, cripple all my powers.

*Doug.* So! — have I wandered o'er the hills for this?

*Per.* I would not grieve thee, Douglas, well thou  
know'st ;

But thus to hazard on a desperate cast  
Thy golden fortunes ——

*Doug.* Cursed be the blood within me, ——  
Plagues, and the grave o'ertake me, if I leave thee ! —  
Though gulfs yawned under thee, and roaring seas  
Threatened to overwhelm thee !

*Per.* For thy father's sake ——

*Doug.* Peace ! I 'd not go, if staying here would  
strew

His hoar hairs in the tomb, — not stir, by Heaven !  
Must I toss counters ? sum the odds of life,  
When Honor points the way ? When was the blood  
Of Douglas precious in a noble cause ?

*Per.* Nay, hear me, hear me, Douglas, ——

*Doug.* Talk to me  
Of dangers ? Death and shame ! Is not my race  
As high, as fearless, and as proud as thine ?

*Per.* I 've done.

*Doug.* By Heaven, it shames me, Harry Percy,  
Preaching such craven arguments to me. ——  
Now tell me how thou stand'st ; thy cause how prospered.

What has been done ? What projects are afoot ?  
Possess me quickly.

*Per.* Gently ; lest some busy ear  
Be near us. Little have I yet to tell thee.

Thinking my rival's coat would best conceal me,  
I won his favor by a tale scarce feigned.

*Doug.* A Keeper of his chase thy garb bespeaks.

*Per.* Chief Huntsman. Thus disguised, I day by day  
Traverse my native hills, viewing the strength  
And features of the land ; its holds of safety ;  
And searching patriot spirits out. For, still,  
Though kings and gaudy courts remember not,  
Still, in the cottage, and the peasant's heart,  
The memory of my fathers lives. When there,  
The old, the good old day is cited, tears  
Roll down their reverend beards, and genuine love  
Glow in their praises of my sires.

*Doug.* I long  
To press the sons, and tell them what a lord  
Lives yet to rule them.

*Per.* When first I mixed among them, oft I struck,  
Unwittingly, a spark of this same fire.  
Encouraged thus, I sought its latent seeds ;  
Seized opportunities to draw the chase  
Into the bosom of the hills, and spent  
Nights in their hospitable, happy cots.  
There, to high strains, I tuned the minstrel harp,  
Chanting the glories of the ancient day,  
When their brave fathers, scorning to be slaves,  
Rushed with their Chieftain to the battle-field,  
Trode his bold footsteps in the ranks of death,  
And shared his triumphs in the festal hall.

*Doug.* That lulled them, as the north wind does the  
sea.

*Per.* From man to man, and house to house, like fire,

The kindling impulse flew ; till every hind,  
Scarce conscious why, handles his targe and bow ;  
Still talks of change ; starts, if the banished name  
By chance he hears ; and supplicates his Saint  
The true-born offspring may his banner rear,  
With speed, upon the hills.

*Doug.* What lack we ? Spread  
The warlike ensign. On the Border side  
Two hundred veteran spears await your summons.

*Per.* What say'st thou !

*Doug.* Sinews of the house :  
Ready to tread in every track of Douglas.  
By stealth I drew them in from distant points,  
And hid amidst a wood in Chevy-Chase.

*Per.* O, Douglas ! Douglas ! even such a friend,  
For death or life, was thy great sire to mine !

*Doug.* Straight, let us turn our trumpets to the hills ;  
Declare aloud thy name, and wrongs ; in swarms  
Call down the warlike tenantry, and teach  
Aspiring Neville fatal is the day  
The Percy and the Douglas league in arms.

*Per.* If he were all — Remember haughty Henry,  
The nephew of his wife,\* whose word could speed  
A veteran army to his kinsman's aid.

*Doug.* Come one, come all ; leave us to welcome  
them.

*Per.* There lives a sad remembrancer for us. —  
Think of our fathers ! Think of Shrewsbury !

*Doug.* Hum !

\* Joan, Countess of Westmoreland, was half-sister to Henry IV.

*Per.* Their cause was upright; all that hearts of  
flesh,

And falchions tempered in an earthly wave,  
Could do, their valor wrought; yet Percy fell,  
And Douglas was a captive.

*Doug.* Well; what then?  
Because fate baffled them, must we despair?

*Per.* Ha! yonder 's Elinor,—Westmoreland's daughter,—

This lucky chance I wished. — Douglas, away. —  
Seek, by the river side, a Hermitage  
Carved in the rock. That half-worn path will guide  
thee.

*Doug.* This way?

*Per.* The left hand path. I 'll come to thee anon.  
Donald shall be thy name. Mark,—mine is Arthur.  
(*Exeunt.*)

## SCENE II.

*A lawn before the gate. Enter ELINOR, attended  
by a Damsel.*

*El.* As o'er the hills we flew, the very heavens  
Frowned wild and ominous; but when I woke,  
So melancholy sweet the moon looked on me,  
Murmurs so soothing stole upon mine ear,  
Awhile, I thought myself in some new being.

*Dams.* Fairies keep revel on such nights, and oft  
About the traveller make woods and glades  
Seem full of voices, airs, and shrill, sweet pipings —

*El.* But spake he, Agnes, — as thou saidst? —

*Dams.* More like a lord, than a poor vassal, lady;  
Clasped you against his breast, and wept, and swore  
As he were frantic; nay, we thought you dead;  
Killed in the shock that slew the ruffian.

*Enter PERCY.*

*El.* Ha!

*Agnes,* —

*Per.* Lady, a moment hear my suit.

*El.* Your suit! — What suit?

*Per.* A youth who loves, and, in his prosperous days,  
Favored me, wandering in a woodman's weeds,  
From home and kindred parted, craves a place,  
(Hearing my fortune in your father's service,)  
An humble place, among the train I lead.

*El.* Receive him like a brother, Arthur;  
Welcome the wanderer to my father's house.  
But say, — what tidings from the Regent pass?  
I saw you from my tower, at peep of dawn,  
In parley with a Scottish courier.

*Per.* No news.

*El.* How fares my lady Albany?

*Per.* Soft, benedicite! a tale there was.  
The Northern Muses weep, and wreath their harps  
With mournful willows; Lady Regent pines,  
Wan as a shade; court ladies droop, and sigh,  
Forsake their lutes, and talk of nunneries:  
Mirth, music, merry-making, melody,  
Speed the light hours no more at Holyrood: —  
The King of Glee, the gamesome Percy, 's fled.

*El.* Has Percy fled?

*Per.* So says the courier ; none  
Knows whither.

*El.* Gracious Heaven, protect his steps !

*Per.* Ha !

You speak with fervor, lady.

*El.* While I rove

These woods and walks, and wander through those halls  
Of lonely grandeur, every object wakes  
Some sad remembrance of the noble outcast.

I entered, late, a long-neglected tower,  
Where, grey with cobwebs, torn, and soiled with dust,  
The ancient pictures of the race decay.

There, dark-browed Hotspur, stooping to the charge,  
With many a famed, majestic Percy, moulders.

A thrill of terror rooted me ; they seemed to frown,  
And menace me with hostile eyes ;

Question my right in their domain ; and ask,  
With looks of accusation, for their son.

*Per.* How would their warlike fronts indignant burn,  
Could they behold the losel whom thou pitiest !

*El.* Who knows, alas, but we have made him such ?  
Have we not driven him from his native seats  
Out to the pitiless world, deprived of all  
That makes life dear ? Who knows but he has rushed  
To pleasure's bowers for shelter from despair ? —  
Ill-fated youth ! the passions that have scathed,  
Had, haply, fired thee to immortal deeds,  
Shed lustre o'er thy country, decked thy brows  
With wreaths unfading as the amaranth.

*Per.* Sure thou hast trod the gardens where it blooms,  
And learned compassion at the lips of Angels.



*El.* I would not purchase greatness at this price,  
Would welcome, rather, some obscure retreat ;  
Nor dream of splendor, save when Fancy spread  
Pavilions in the clouds, or tracked the moon,  
Or visited those mystic orbs of fire  
Spangling heaven's curtains, and beyond them heard  
The entrancing viols and unearthly voices,  
Sometimes to Saints made audible below, —  
Than reign the Queen of an adoring world,  
If I must do it in another's right.

*Per.* Ah ! would to Heaven such justice swayed all  
          hearts.

*El.* With but my sire's consent, how pleased would I  
Resign these sumptuous halls to their just lord ;  
Seek Raby's bowers ; and never, never more,  
Forsake the shades where, like a vision, flew  
My happy youth ! the scenes of innocence,  
Of peace, and sunshine, where my joyous heart  
Chimed with the blithest music of the woodlands.  
No sorrow there, no secret — (*Stops abruptly.*)

*Per.* Sorrow !  
Dares she intrude into a Seraph's breast ?  
Alas ! art thou exposed —

*El.* Am I ? — Look up,  
Presumptuous youth, and, if thou canst, regard  
The dazzling summit where the Neville shines.  
Do clouds of sorrow roll so high ? — Agnes !

(*Exit.*)

*Per.* Vanished again ! — What means this change-  
          ful mood ?  
It grows upon her. Even when she seems

Gentlest, and sweetest, breathing from her lips —  
Perpetual troubler of my thoughts ! by Heaven,  
This fellow dogs me. — Well, how now ?

*Enter Rook, as talking to himself.*

*Rook.*

When Cats, and fawning Mongrels, be  
Exalted into Men's degree, —

Captain !

*Per.* How now, I say ?

*Rook.* Good morrow, noble captain !    (*Passes.*)

Then Wit and Reason must be grown  
Just fit to mouse, and gnaw a bone.

(*Exit.*)

*Per.* I must beware this knave : —

He peers about me with a lynx's eye :

Thrice has surprised me at unguarded moments.

He turns, — I 'll cross the brake and hie to Douglas.

(*Exit.*)

## ACT III.

SCENE I. *A deep, shady solitude, before the Hermitage of Warkworth.* — PERCY and DOUGLAS sitting on a stone bench by the door of the cell.

*Per.* Caution must rein our ardor : see the land  
Drained for these wars ; the King and Westmoreland  
O'er seas, with all the turbulent, bold spirits,  
Busy in France : — then, stir for Mortimer,  
Make common cause with him, and we may thrive.

*Doug.* With Mortimer ?

*Per.* My cousin Edmund's son, the lineal heir  
Of Clarence, lives : our rightful Sovereign.

*Doug.* Where ?

*Per.* In London ; whence I hourly look for tidings.  
But, if nought sinister by waves or war  
Befall the King, an absent pilot leaves  
The galley reeling. Men begin to murmur.  
This prodigal, say they, for selfish ends,  
Drags to unknown, inhospitable graves,  
Our sons ; barter their bones for barren fame ;  
Leaves us to starve, while he, on foreign shores,  
Plucks blood-stained laurels.

*Doug.* Talk they thus ?

*Per.* Douglas,  
If Mortimer inherits but a soul,  
And once Northumberland will lift her voice,  
Oft, through the realm, in dark and troubled times,

The watch-word of the mighty, hope survives  
For down-trod justice. Number but the host  
Of discontented spirits late fallen off;  
More, groaning yet beneath his father's stripes :  
And more that, from the first, pitying wronged Richard,  
Hated this proud usurping race, and fought  
In Percy's battles for the rightful heir :  
All, waiting but the call.

*Doug.* If this be so,  
What fear ?

*Per.* And that were glory ! grasp at once  
My own lost heritage, and throne my King !  
Sometimes the vision dances in my eyes,  
But ah ! I fear, a glittering, empty bubble.  
Monmouth is wise, dauntless as Mars, and proved  
In all the issues of the field ; he knows  
The talisman that rules a soldier's heart ;  
Success has shed a blaze about his head,  
Dazzling to vulgar gazers : I, the while,  
Am but a stripling, yet unknown ; my cause  
Unsanctioned by a name of power, save thine.

*Doug.* But thou hast justice on thy side.

*Per.* Alas !

And had not Hotspur, too, when he lay stiffening ?  
Douglas, I 've looked through men, and marked the  
ways

Inscrutable, and dark, of Providence.  
Too oft the righteous is the luckless cause.  
Nay, have not holy men, in every age ——

*Doug.* Sweet lad, trouble not me with saintly lore.  
One thing I know, and, spite of flesh, will cleave to :—  
The justice of our cause can never hurt it.

*Per.* Ha! 't is himself.

*Enter BERTRAM, attired like a Hermit.*

*Bert.* Heaven speed ye, sons!

*Per.* (*embracing him.*) Nay, Bertram, thou behold'st  
a second self.

This is that youthful Douglas, whose renown  
Has reached thine ears.

*Bert.* Why then I see my brother of adoption,  
A true-born son of never-daunted Douglas.

*Doug.* Approve him as you find him.

*Per.* Long, and dark,  
And tragic, is the page of Bertram's story.  
Its emblems carved within this rock shall speak.  
Suffice it, Douglas, cruel fate, with wounds  
Incurable, had pierced his noble heart.  
Here, in this cell, I found him, where, in tears,  
Sackcloth, and bitter penance, Bothal's lord  
Had twenty winters mourned. He loved my sires,  
For whom his fathers and himself had fought;  
For Bertram, once, stood foremost of the brave.  
His faith and wisdom proved, my birth I told,  
Demanding counsel. Roused by Percy's name,  
The sorrowing Hermit woke, forsook his cell,  
Cast off the cherished burthen of his griefs,  
Serves me, and loves me with a zeal like thine.

*Doug.* Thy hand. Brave Baron, I have heard thy  
fame,  
But thought thee mingled with the dead.

*Bert.* The pangs  
Of many deaths may be endured.

*Per.* Hark! (*Horns heard in the forest.*)  
What horns are those? — And horsemen?

*Doug.* Lo! again.

*Per.* Strike through the wood and see : lest I be  
sought. — (Exit DOUGLAS.)

Well, Bertram, speak. What speed?

*Bert.* Alas, my lord, no hopes.

*Per.* Ha, why?

*Bert.* A high-born spirit so ignoble,  
So grov'ling, wedded to base things, lives not.

*Per.* O Fate!

*Bert.* He scarce is known at court : he soils  
His nobleness by fellowship with cullions :  
Spurns lore and chivalry, to waste his days  
In vulgar revels with the city scum.

*Per.* O, Mortimer! — But didst thou probe him, Ber-  
tram?

Search to his heart? Show the foul wrong he suffers?

*Bert.* I courted him ; oft drew him into talk :  
Spoke of his father, grandsire, all his house  
Downward from Lionel ; wept their fallen fortunes ;  
Touched on his claim ; the people's discontent ;  
In my discourse, still, as by chance, let fall  
Words that had pierced, like scorpion stings, a breast  
Not seared to honor ; but, a bond-slave, dolt,  
Or idiot, had been moved to nobler fire.

*Per.* O, Nature ! thou conspirest, too,  
With my cursed stars.

*Bert.* He ne'er can serve our purpose.  
We need a young Prince rarely versed ; who knows  
Men, and the times ; apt, shrewd, and valiant ; skilled  
To catch and fix the wavering multitude.  
But Mortimer, in nought —

*Per.* A curse upon him !

I would not stain the venerable chair  
Where Alfred shone, and godlike Edward sat  
'Midst captive Kings ; so oft by heroes filled,  
Whose wisdom, toil, and valor through the world  
Have spread our glory, made our narrow Isle  
Queen of the Sea, and Arbitress of Nations, —  
No, — not for empire would I stain that throne  
With such a hilding. Henry's faults are princely,  
Such as in noble natures aptest grow,  
And ne'er will soil the robe not rightly his.

*Re-enter DOUGLAS, hastily.*

*Doug.* Friends, — friends, —

*Bert.* What now ?

*Doug.* The King is coming.

*Per.* What !

*Doug.* True, as the faith, — the English King, —  
This night, to Warkworth !

*Per.* (*with a start.*) When ?

*Doug.* This very night,  
And with a slender train.

*Per.* Immortal heaven !

*Doug.* Infernal hell ! if ever he depart  
Till Harry Percy hold his own.

*Per.* To-night ! —

We cannot ! — Bertram ! — Douglas ! — God of heaven !  
Had but a day — but one twelve hours of time —

*Doug.* Hear, Percy ! list ! He hunts  
To-morrow ; couches here to-morrow night ;  
Next morning, goes ; — if we, like coistrils, slaves,  
Base stirrup-lackeys, cap in hand, cry, Speed !

*Per.* (*smiting his breast.*) 'T is come! — 't is come!  
The issue of my fate! —

*Bert.* Beware! refrain! — Lord Douglas, answer  
me, —

Were yonder horsemen couriers of the King?

*Doug.* My lord, they were, and thus report. The  
King,

Riding a course to Berwick, with a train  
Of twenty Nobles and an hundred Knights,  
Will reach this castle by the hour of curfew;  
To-morrow rouse a stag; and northward wend  
With next day's earliest sun.

*Per.* That sun shall see  
Our banner in the wind, or me released  
From earthly thraldom! — There's a path — a hope —  
A glorious path! — Question not — parley not —  
Douglas — those spearmen! — Mount a fleet steed, Ber-  
tram —

This ring — (*producing a ring from his bosom.*)

— was once my grandsire's signet; drawn  
From his dead hand on Bramham-Moor. For life,  
Hurry away to Mountfort. Thou wilt find him  
Clad like a minstrel, in an humble cot  
Fast by the towers of Fitzhugh. Say, the man  
Whose crest is on that ring has need of him.  
He will commune with Fitzhugh, and direct  
Your steps to Bardolph. Join me all — fail not —  
Conjure them so — by twilight, in the cavern.

*Bert.* Speaks Mountfort to his name?

*Per.* Ask for old Harold,  
The harper — Children know the ancient minstrel.



Or, shouldst thou spy a giant-boned old man,  
Stooping his bulk upon a charging-staff,  
His locks and beard like hoar-frost, yet his brows  
Shaggy and black, 't is Mountfort. Now, to horse.

*Doug.* Come on.

*Per.* Would thou couldst meet these friends to-night.

*Doug.* That will I, by the ghost of Merlin! Choose  
A clean-limbed steed, and lend me spurs. I need  
But strike the march; my kinsman Malcolm's trusty.

*Per.* Bertram, lead Douglas to the forest-gate:  
I'll follow with the coursers.

(*Exeunt.*)

## SCENE II.

*A court before the stables. Rook, alone.*

*Rook.* Some Juggler's brat, I'll swear, by Gypsies  
kidnapped,  
Knavish by nature, and in lies instructed,  
Left in a barn asleep, has slipped his masters,  
And come to practise his fine arts on us.  
Even if he be no worse. — Here comes my lord.  
Now, greensleeve, if thou'rt not hag-born, beware me!

*Enter WESTMORELAND.*

*West.* Which way went Arthur?

*Rook.* Toward the wood, my lord,  
With Shiek and Lady Bayard by the bit,  
Scarce cooled since yesterday.

*West.* Whither?

*Rook.* Heaven knows,  
Not I. — Perhaps, on Percy's service.

*West.* Rook,  
If thou guard'st not that venom'd tongue —

*Rook.* No doubt, no doubt, my lord, he serves you  
ably ;

Much better than a poor, plain vassal, bred  
In good old Westmoreland, of seed that 's known,  
And served your father well, and might, mayhap,  
Lead out a course as well as he. Nor spleen,  
Nor malice prompt me, my good lord, but love  
And true allegiance. Could your lordship list  
An odd adventure that befell me, late,  
Upon the hunt ?

*West.* If it concern me, speak.

*Rook.* My lord, I sometimes ride upon the chase,  
An humble follower, like the rest, of Arthur.  
Not long ago, leading us up and down  
Under a burning sun the livelong day,  
He stopped at evening 'midst a group of huts  
Sequestered in the Cheviots. In a dingle,  
Divided from the rest some furlongs, stood  
Three lonely cabins : there, by strict command,  
The train was sheltered ; but, for lack of room,  
My lord, my steed was stabled in a barn  
Planted amidst the thick of cottages.  
When I had slept, methought, an hour or twain,  
I woke ; and as I mused, upon my straw,  
Chanced to remember somewhat left undone  
Most needful for my harassed beast. I rose ;  
And drawing towards the green (the moon being bright)

Round which the dwellings of the hamlet stood,  
Descried a press of peasants by a door.  
Stopping, I through the smoky lattice saw  
Within, encompassed by a gaping crowd,  
Our noble leader high in argument.

*West.* Arthur?

*Rook.* The same, my lord. — Greyheaded men,  
And boys, and all between, stock still, agape,  
Swallowed his words like tidings from the grave,  
While he, with gestures fierce, and eyes like beacons,  
Of Hotspur spoke.

*West.* Of Hotspur!

*Rook.* Ha! — he comes! —  
Ever, my lord, he named him —

*West.* Peace! begone!  
When the stir 's past of this day and the next,  
I 'll more of this. Begone! (*Exit Rook.*) How dare  
he touch

That theme among my vassals? — Hotspur! ha!

*Enter PERCY.*

*Per.* Joy to my lord, and his illustrious dame,  
That conquering Henry draws so near to Warkworth.

*West.* Thou 'rt well encountered. — But a day he  
stays,  
And means to hunt, and I a course would hold  
Worthy my King. Look to it, knave. Be found  
In trim: with horses, hawks, hounds, harness, train,  
Glistening, and plumed for speed. Send Ivo out  
To warn the Cheviot warden.

*Per.* Good my lord,  
Fear not. — What say ye to a Masque, my lord,  
After the chase, in honor of the King?

*West.* A Masque?

*Per.* After the banquet, with my lord's good leave,  
I know a little pageant that might draw  
Attention from your guests and Royal Kinsman.

*West.* 'T would please me, sirrah.

*Per.* Vizards, and hoods, and mail, are all we need.

*West.* Open the armory.

*Per.* And please, my gracious lord,  
That busy, meddling fools pry not about me—

*West.* Prate not. Begone unto your tasks.

(*Exit PERCY.*)

That Rook regards him with a jaundiced eye,  
Hates, and would cast him, gladly, from my favor,  
Full well I know. There's large allowance:—still,  
To name amidst those peevish, factious slaves,  
The race they worship dearer than their God,  
Is treason. None that loved me e'er would do it. —  
Anon, I'll know the meaning of this tale.

(*Exit.*)

## ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A cavern : a fire of embers burning on the ground. PERCY standing in the cavern's mouth.*

*Per.* 'T is time they came. — That broad and crimson cloud

Which, just now, seemed a fretted vault of fire,  
Wave after wave, grows pale and gray : — the rooks  
Are hush : — the amber tint of twilight fades. —  
How oft have I, when fortune seemed afar,  
Gazed, musing, on that lingering streak of day,  
And wondered if, in all the shining realms  
Fancied beyond those hills, a bosom dwelt  
So desolate as mine ! Or eyed yon star  
Kindle her cresset in the glowing West,  
And wished her placid bowers had been my birthplace !  
Now, my exulting heart would scarce exchange  
Her hopes for Paradise. — Michael to aid !  
Rid'st thou a hippogriff ?

*Enter DOUGLAS.*

*Doug.* Well, by the hum,  
Hurry, and stir abroad, our quarry 's harboured ?

*Per.* Two hours ago.

*Doug.* How strong ?

*Per.* Two hundred Knights,  
And twenty Nobles.

*Doug.* Humph ! one hundred Knights,  
The courier said.

*Per.* No matter.

*Doug.* Merrier sport ;  
That 's all.

*Per.* You found the soldiers safe ?

*Doug.* Impatient for my summons : dight like pilgrims,

In separate bands, by ways obscure they come,  
To meet upon the outskirts of the wood. —  
Where 's Bertram ?

*Per.* Not yet come.

*Doug.* Not —

*Per.* Hark ! — I hear them.

*Doug.* Whose deep-toned voice is that ?

*Per.* Old Mountfort's. Mark me, Douglas — he alone,  
Knows me, or this day's chance : the rest expect  
But Percy's emissary. Name me not.

*Enter* BERTRAM, MOUNTFORT, BARDOLPH, FITZHUGH,  
and several Peasants.

Thrice welcome, valiant Mountfort, to our cell !  
Lords Fitzhugh, Bardolph, and the rest, all welcome.

*Mount.* Dark as a den of Cyclops ! else my eyes  
Wax dim apace. Where art thou ?

*Per.* Here, my lord.

*Mount.* Ay, — press me, — make me young again.  
My lords,

This is the youth I spoke of.

*Per.* Stir a blaze,  
That we may see each other's faces, Bertram.

*Doug.* Most noble Mountfort, let me guide thy steps  
To yonder jutting rock.

*Mount.* Who speaks ? ha ?

*Doug.* (*in a low tone.*) Douglas.

*Mount.* Guide me.

Thy voice did thrill my pulses like a trumpet.

(*Whispering.*) What ! has he stooped ? the Royal bird ?

*Doug.* Perched, my good lord.

*Mount.* Good King ! sweet King ! shrive, shrive ! I shall see day yet.

(*DOUGLAS conducts MOUNTFORT to a seat on the rock by the fire ; which BERTRAM replenishes and fans to a blaze.*)

*Per.* (*to the Peasants.*)

Draw near, my loving friends : stand not apart.

*Mount.* Now then, explain the cause of this hot summons.

*Per.* In part, my lords, you may have heard its purport ?

*Bard.* Touching our master's son, Lord Mountfort said,

Young Percy.

*Per.* Whom I serve : the hapless youth  
For whose illustrious Fathers yours have bled  
An idle sacrifice. For, where, alas !  
The pomp, power, victories, they dearly bought ?  
The storied memory, my lords, is left  
In chronicles of other times, and serves,  
Serves but to wring an Exile's breast with anguish.  
In the cold tomb their wreath of glory lies :  
The Chieftain's arm protects no more : his voice,  
That should have cheered you in the fields of fame ;  
In peace, ruled, shepherd-like, his flock, yet sleeps  
Mute and inglorious, in a land of strangers.

My friend — has a true heart ; — desires,  
And memory ; — knows what his fathers were ; —  
Like them aspires : — judge how he feels his fate !  
All day, upon some sea-beat rock he sits,  
Mourning his people and himself as orphans,  
And begs, as Heaven's best boon, once to behold them.

*First Peas. (to the others.)* Mark that ! (*Drawing near.*) The Percy loves us, then ?

*Second Peas.* When saw you, Sir, our noble master ?

*Mount.* Peace ! —

No matter, now. — Go on. — Pardon me, friends.

*Per.* Your father, noble Bardolph, was the friend  
Of old Northumberland, and fared with him  
When, bowed with bitter years, the reckless Earl,  
Heart-broken by the loss of Hotspur, fled,  
Exposing to the time's vicissitudes,  
Insult, and want, and scorn, his hoary head,  
Rather than knee the murderers of his son.  
Through all his pilgrimage, thy noble sire  
Watched his sad steps, and cheered him from despair.  
At last, around his banners, from the North,  
Mustering a scanty train, he vowed to die,  
Or reave from Bolingbroke the blood-stained crown.  
On Bramham-Moor, Bardolph partook his fate. —  
Percy was yet a child ; but having heard  
This tale, with every circumstance of love  
Shown to his grandsire by your noble father,  
Loves, even as his own, your name and race.

*Bard.* Doth he ? — Heaven judge me as I love him too !

*Per.* Presuming on that love, he bade me speak. —



In happier days, the name of Fitzhugh ranked  
High 'mid the valiant who for Percy drew. —  
But persecuted Mountfort, whose own eyes  
Witnessed the downfall of his master's house,  
Hunted, proscribed, an outlaw for his faith  
And zeal untamable in Percy's cause,  
Would spring, we knew, to vengeance.

*Mount.* By the gods,  
Though fourscore stiffening winters gripe my limbs,  
And dim these eyeballs, with a cripple's crutch  
I 'd beard the tyrant !

*Bard.* Persuasion it needs not to stir my heart.  
Much have I wished me near the noble youth ;  
Daily and nightly I implore my Saint  
To keep and counsel him. But for our babes,  
I had not now been here, — had long ago  
Wedded my own to his abandoned fortunes.  
Say to my exiled Chieftain, Bardolph holds  
Life but for him, and will his summons answer  
As his dear father's voice spake from the ground.

*Mount.* St. George and victory ! the day is won.

*Per.* The Percy shall requite thee, Bardolph.

*Mount.* Now,

What says my son-in-law ? what says Hugh Fitzhugh ?

*Fitz.* Commend me to the youth, and wish him well.

*Mount.* Wish him ! — But barren wishes, son ?

*Fitz.* Nor more,

Nor less, Sir.

*Mount.* (*stepping back.*) Fiends ! is this your answer ?

*Fitz.* Yes, rash man.

*Mount.* Hell sear thy tongue, then, runagate,

When thou claimest kindred next with Marmaduke !  
By all my wrongs I swear to starve, rot, kneel  
To Lancaster, — to Neville kneel, — ere owe  
Shelter or succour to a recreant more.

*Doug.* And so would I, by Jupiter ! — Avaunt !

*Fitz.* Stand off, young Brave ! I 'll teach you, else,  
to tremble !

*Doug.* Teach Douglas —

*Per.* Douglas ! Mountfort ! Peace, for Heaven's sake !

*Doug.* (*grasping FITZHUGH.*) Learn first, thou craven —

*Per.* Hold ! (*Thrusts DOUGLAS to the wall.*) What !  
are we ruffians ?

A den of bandits ? — Stir not, on thy life ! —

Why, Mountfort, thou art rash as madness. —

Brave Fitzhugh, turn not — Shame ! shame ! outrage !

Turn not, indignant — Fie, my lord, O fie !

(*To MOUNTFORT.*)

To mock your own white head !

*Mount.* Look ye, (*takes off his cap*) my nonpareil !  
my valiant wisher !

Here stands the noble Percy : this is he.

Wish for thyself ! Beseech ye, wish ! — What ! dumb ?

*Per.* Be dumb thyself, or by my father's soul,  
Age, name, and love, shall vanish on the word !

*Peasants.* (*who had crowded round PERCY.*)

Art thou, indeed, our Chief ? Is Arthur, Percy ?

*Per.* The same, my friends — Thanks, for your steadfast love.

*First Peas.* Kneel, ye unmannered boors. —

Dear, honored, noble master, may a poor

Unworthy vassal kiss thy hand ?

*Second Peas.* And I?

*Third Peas.* And I?

*Fourth Peas.* And I?

*Per.* Remember, I have proved,  
And love you all. — Stands Bardolph yet aloof?

*Bard.* O Percy! Percy! — If this form be he  
Clasped in my arms, what more can Heaven bestow?

*Mount.* Be he? Look, Bardolph! look! Be he, for-  
sooth!

Whose kingly front? whose falcon eye is that?

*Per.* Come, Baron Fitzhugh, to my heart. Thy wish,  
Thy friendly wish, I prize. Forget, my lord,  
The hasty words of your impetuous father,  
Who from aspersion would your honor guard  
At his life's hazard. — Here, a comrade stands,  
Whose hot pulse travels at a pace with Mountfort's :  
Archibald Douglas, son to Scotland's earl.

*Doug.* (*wringing BARDOLPH'S hand.*)

Lord Bardolph, thine till death; and thine, old Chief.

*Bard.* Thanks, noble Douglas! — But methinks I  
dream.

*Per.* Long had I languished for my native land;  
Burned from my father's battlements to rend  
The hostile crest, and vindicate their fame;  
Oft, round my bed their restless spirits stalked,  
With looks indignant, pointing to their tombs  
By foemen trampled. Plighting Heaven an oath  
To rescue them, or be myself their tenant,  
I hither came, to see what friends, what hopes,  
Survived our fortunes. Hid beneath this vest,  
With eyes observant I've explored the land,

Trying the temper of our ancient vassals,  
And find our house, beyond my utmost hope,  
Loved and remembered. Neville's yoke they loathe.  
The sun-burned ancient darkens at his name,  
Deep vengeance threatening when his injured lord  
From Scottish hills descends to claim his birthright.  
With blessings, prayers, and vows, am I invoked  
As their deliverer.

*Mount.* The meanest hind  
Chained to the soil, would welcome death for Percy.

*Per.* Fired by such zeal, I had a scheme devised  
Would task their valor, had not happy chance  
Opened a surer path to all my wishes. —  
With you it rests to terminate our woes,  
Chase these disastrous clouds, and give again  
Our planet to her lustre. Fate has cast  
Even at my feet my princely heritage.

*Bard.* What means my lord?

*Mount.* 'T is true as Heaven! one grasp  
Reclaims Northumberland.

*Fitz. (aside.)* Madness!

*Bard.* If there be hope in arms, and Bardolph faint,  
Let "Coward" be his epitaph.

*Per.* How beats  
Lord Fitzhugh's heart?

*Fitz.* In tune with Bardolph's. But, with blindfold  
eyes,  
To seal conspiracy, pass desperate pledge  
With a mere stranger, sooth to say, whose name  
Bore not its old repute, whose fortunes seemed  
Given o'er to ruin, had not less been frenzy

Than risk, for nought, my life on raging seas,  
Or, for the fallen, leap a precipice.  
My heart was with you, Sir, — my sword shall be,  
When reason's semblance guides the enterprise.  
But, noble Percy, humbly let me ask,  
What can two thousand vassals, toil-worn hinds,  
To counsel, camps, and arms unused, against  
The might of Neville, backed by England's King?

*Per.* Your words seem wise, and show considerate  
thoughts.

Now lend, my friends, a heedful ear.

*Mount.* Draw nearer.

*Per.* King Henry is in yonder castle.

*Fitz.* Sir!

*Per.* The King : — this night arrived : — slightly attended.

*Bard.* Ha!

*Mount.* What think ye now? — The tyrant, Bar-  
dolph! Here!

Come like a victim to the sacrifice!

*Per.* All that my restless heart has panted for ;  
Clung to, despairing, as affection clasps  
The breathless clay ; which might have wasted life  
In hopeless chase, and left me, if my youth  
'Scaped sword and dungeon, but an exile's grave,  
Relenting Heaven, in pity offers me.  
Yourselves shall judge. — In honor of the King,  
The Earl, to-morrow, holds a mighty hunt,  
And grants me leave, at night, to show a Masque.  
Arms, and the keys, to that intent, are mine.  
My lords, this cavern, seemingly barred up

By yonder rocks, issues beneath the castle ;  
Commanding by a range of vaults, unknown  
To its new lord, the hall and posterns ; scooped  
For special purpose in my grandsire's wars.  
Through this, what power we please, may be conveyed  
Into the walls ; environ them without,  
And every gate, ward, avenue, is ours,  
Even to the hall of state, where, high in pomp,  
The King and nobles feast. The castle won,  
Whose voice will dictate ? — Will they for their lives  
Cavil on nice conditions ? call my lands  
A hard exaction as a Monarch's ransom ?

*Mount.* Will they gainsay our daggers ?

*Fitz.* Troth, my lord,  
What looked as to attempt the mid-day sun,  
Appears an easy triumph.

*Per.* Can we fail ? —  
The train will then be weary, flown with wine,  
Unarmed, and unsuspecting.

*Bard.* Death, or life,  
I 'll stake upon the cast !

*Doug.* O, noble Bardolph !

*Mount.* Speak, Fitzhugh, speak !

*Fitz.* And I.

*Per.* Then briefly, Sirs, how many trusty spears  
Can ye lead up to-morrow night by curfew ?

*Bard.* (after a pause.) My lord, five hundred.

*Per.* What says gallant Fitzhugh ?

*Fitz.* (with hesitation.)

Three hundred spears, and crossbows, were the utmost.

*Mount.* (aside to FITZHUGH.) Five hundred, son, five  
hundred say : match him.

*Fitz.* Impossible, my lord ! On one day's notice ?

*Mount.* Call in the Devil ! — Percy, I do pledge  
Five hundred for my son and self : I 'm known  
To some brave hearts ; I boast a little power ;  
I 'll eke it, by my soul !

*Per.* And bind me ever.

*Bert.* My lord — (*Draws PERCY aside.*)

*Doug.* Old bird of flame,  
Thou must fly north, and snuff our mountain air,  
And soar with strong-winged Douglas.

*Mount.* Mass, and will,  
Young goshawk : score with Monmouth first.

*Per.* My lords, let all come singly to this forest.  
Come not in bands ; the hunt will be abroad  
Through all the Border. Charge, with strictest heed,  
Each soldier, — mark me, Sirs, — to wear a bugle.

(*To the Peasants.*)

Friends, you possess my bosom thoughts. Demean  
Yourselves like men. Assist your worthy lords  
In calling in their vassals, — mates of trust :  
Next week, perchance, the grandsire on his crutch,  
Your wives and little ones, with garlands crowned,  
Will join the feast at Percy's jubilee.

*First Peas.* Let that day come,  
We care not if our requiem 's next.

*Per.* Now, gentle friends, farewell ! Heaven be our  
shield !

Good night, brave-hearted Mountfort ! Like an oak  
By ages buffeted, thy hoary top  
Still scorns the tempest.

*Mount.* Time rolls backward, Percy ! —

This joyful night, as in a wizard's glass,  
Shows me myself when these white locks were raven,  
These withered sinews like the Danite's nerve,  
And hope rekindles me.

*Bard.* My lord, farewell.

*Per.* Bardolph and Fitzhugh, both farewell. Fail  
not.

*Fitz.* No fear.

*Peasants.* Good night, brave Percy.

*Per.* Guard ye Heaven!

(*Exeunt.*)

## SCENE II.

*A bedchamber. A lamp burning. Armour lying on the table and floor. PERCY walking up and down the room.*

*Per.* O! for those vanished hours so much mis-  
prized! —

Strange! when the music of her tongue I heard,  
Gazed on her face, basked in her smiles, my soul  
Could pine for other good! — From some dim world,  
I may look back with anguish to the days  
When here, with her, in my paternal shades  
I dwelt, and wish my heart had known her rest. —  
I may have ta'en my last adieu. — Who knows? —  
To leave her thus! — believing me a churl  
Incapable of any touch — (*Pauses, listening.*) — What  
strain? —

(*Approaches the lattice.*)



A light yet burning in her tower ! — Ye Saints ! —  
Her voice and harp ! — past midnight — Ha ! could I  
not —

That same was once my mother's oratory —  
I know the secret entrance. — Powers of love ! ——  
(*After a moment's irresolution, snatches the  
lamp, and exit.*)

### SCENE III.

*An oratory opening into ELINOR's chamber. A missal  
spread upon the altar, before a crucifix : over it a  
large picture of the Virgin. ELINOR kneeling, and  
singing to her harp.*

*El.*

O, holy Virgin, call thy child,  
Her spirit longs to be with thee ;  
For threatening lower those skies so mild,  
Whose faithless day-star dawned for me.

From tears released to speedy rest,  
From youthful dreams which all beguiled,  
To quiet slumber on thy breast,  
O, holy Virgin, call thy child.

Joy from my darkling soul is fled,  
And haggard phantoms haunt me wild ;  
Despair assails, and Hope is dead :  
O, holy Virgin, call thy child.

(*As the sound of her harp ceases, the picture  
slides, discovering PERCY, wrapped in a cloak,  
with a lamp. She starts.*)

Grace keep us !

*Per.* Fear not, lady ; angel guardians  
Surround by night the bower of Innocence.

*(Springs down.)*

*El.* What apparition ? —

*Per.* *(throwing off his cloak.)* Pardon, gentle lady !  
Bold as ~~may~~ seem —

*El.* Ha ! do I wake ? — What dost thou here, audacious ?

At midnight ! — Hence, rash youth ! with speed, begone !  
Hence ! or I wake the house. How darest thou, slave,  
Steal on the secrets of my worship ? — Fly !  
Thy very life may answer such an outrage.

*Per.* Sweet lady, hear me.

*El.* Quit this place.

*Per.* One word —

*El.* Heavens ! is the Neville's daughter so abased  
That grooms dispute her chamber ? — Ho !

*Per.* Nay then —

But, by my soul's eternal hope, I swear  
In gratitude, in honor, but to say  
*Farewell*, I came.

*El.* How ?

*Per.* No matter : — when we meet again, — above,  
Thou 'lt better know me. God be with you, lady.

*(Takes his lamp, going.)*

*El.* Nay, now, I know not what thou meanest.

*Per.* Sweet saint,  
I would have told thee.

*El.* Goest thou from our service ?

*Per.* Thus to interpret ! — Sooner would I dare  
Insult a glowing Cherub, perish in his glance,  
Than sully, but in thought, thy purity.

*El.* If I have done injustice —

*Per.* Speak ; I pause.

*El.* What canst thou have to say ?

*Per.* Thanks, thanks unnumbered,  
Blessings unspeakable for all thy favors.  
Shrined here, — while life beats, — worshipped, they  
will dwell,  
Although thy beauty I behold no more.

*El.* No more !

*Per.* My heart is full, — yet scarce —  
Thou know'st, when I became an inmate here,  
I called myself an orphan ; desolate ;  
In the wide earth alone. So far, thou heard'st  
A mournful truth ; yet I deceived you.

*El.* Ha !

Deceived us, Arthur ?

*Per.* Arthur's not my name :  
Nor am I what I seem.

*El.* Shield us ! Who art thou ?

*Per.* Though in your halls a vassal, Arthur boasts  
Blood older than these towers, or any oak  
Leafless with age on yonder hoary hills.  
Thou seest me fallen ; but my Fathers stood  
Their country's bulwark. Kings have quaked to hear  
The rumors of their march : their rushing host  
This sea-throned Isle has to her centre shook.

*El.* What next, I prithee ?

*Per.* Alas !  
What shall I say then ? What will vouch my truth ? —  
Durst I my name reveal —

*El.* O, Sir, forbear :  
A name so potent might unseat our towers.

*Per.* Hast thou, before, found cause my faith to question ?

Ever, before this night ? — In justice —

*El.* No.

*Per.* Believest thou, in this solemn parting hour,  
Lips that dare imprecate Heaven's wrath on falsehood,  
Avenging thunders, hell, and penal judgment,  
My lips, — can frame a lie ? Believest thou this ?

*El.* I would not — cannot think it ; but this tale —

*Per.* A moment, lady, counsel with your heart. —  
Have you not something seen, or fancied, in me,  
That seemed ill coupled with this outward baseness ?  
Arguing a mind above the hireling's pitch,  
A nobler nature, — as in some mewed eagle  
That creeps, degraded, round a peasant's croft,  
Proving the native of the princely eyry ?

*El.* Suppose I have.

*Per.* Recall the time

When first thou saw'st my face ; — the tale I told.  
Glance back to many a trivial circumstance  
That still belied me ; startled thee, so oft,  
And made thee gaze with wildered eyes. O, think,  
Think of that night when righteous Providence  
Rescued your honor : — when the moon beheld  
Your deathlike face, and loose locks on my breast ; —  
When my roused spirit spoke, — all else forgot, —  
High as her bent, and tender as the hour !  
Thou own'st, feel'st truth in this. Mark ! do I, now,  
Fashion my speech in phrase of servitude ?  
Would the carle's tuneless tongue prove false the boast  
That courts have been my home ; my walk with princes ;

My toil the Antique Sages' lore ; my sport,  
Penning the roundelay for ladies' lyres,  
Who paid me with the radiance of their eyes ?

*El.* Pray leave me.

*Per.* One brief moment ere we part. —

I go — I go — where Destiny conducts me : —  
To be myself ; — or cast disguise, and life,  
Together, off. In rank thine equal, peer  
To England's proudest, powerful as thy sire,  
And crowned with old hereditary laurels,  
Arthur returns, or never more. Ah ! say,  
If Fate should smile, — wilt thou smile too ? — canst  
thou,

O, canst thou bid me rise — to life, to love,  
To paradise with thee ?

*El.* My heart, — I mean, —

I'm giddy : all my senses seem bewildered.

*Per.* Ah ! may I construe silence ? — Tongues  
More used to ecstasy might talk of mine !

*El.* But whither goest thou ? — on what quest ?

*Per.* I cannot answer thee.

*El.* But is there danger ?

*Per.* Question me not, for chains are on my tongue.

*El.* O ! choose some more propitious season.

*Per.* No ;

One mystic hour the characters of fate

Mark for the enterprise, that must not pass me.

*El.* What dreadful meaning lurks beneath your  
words ?

I fear — I fear —

*Per.* For Arthur ?

*El.* Methinks I dream; so strange, so wildering  
seems

This tale. When ends the mystery? saidst thou when?

*Per.* My fortunes touch upon a speedy issue;  
Nor had thy sympathy been vainly waked,  
Could I have torn my trembling heart away,  
That clung and would not leave thee, — leave thee here,  
Unconscious of my love, — a rival's prize, —  
Never to be remembered more; or deemed  
Senseless of virtues dearer to my soul  
Than breath can utter. Falling, I could now  
Greet death with smiles: the rapturous thought thou  
know'st

My heart's dear hope, and wilt remember me,  
Brightens the dark hour like a glimpse of Eden. —  
Farewell! — the matin star grows dim. — O, heed!  
If this be not a dream of ecstasy,  
A moment comes, is now upon the wing;  
When, unexpected, I may rise to claim —  
To sue — Ah! then shrink not to confess me! —

*(Presses her hand hastily to his lips; ascends.  
The picture closes after him.)*

*El.* *(in a wild tone.)*

He's gone! — to bleed! to perish! — Woe is me!  
What will become of me —

*Enter FLORENCE, from the bedchamber, in her night  
mantle, and clasps ELINOR in her arms.*

*Flor.* Nay, start not, love;  
Waked by your voices, breathless I o'erheard  
Your wondrous interview. Sure he is noble,  
And merits worth like thine.

*El.* (*hiding her face in FLORENCE'S bosom.*)

But he is gone ! —

O Florence, Florence ! — gone for ever, — O !

That he should perish, — just upon the verge  
Of all his hopes !

*Flor.* Not so ; — he spake not so despairing. Hope,  
Methought, gave lively courage to his accents.

*El.* O, dost thou think — (*Stops abruptly.*)

*Flor.* Indeed I do, — I 'm sure  
His voice, his face, his mien, his modesty,  
His valor, every graceful word and act  
Proclaim him noble.

*El.* Ah ! whoe'er he be,  
In such an issue, — had he asked it of me, —  
I would have strengthened him from Neville's power.  
Now, friendless, he is gone, and never more  
Shall I behold him.

*Flor.* Dear Elinor, you will, —  
But hark ! — hark ! as I live, the morning cock !  
Come in ; — come, — on our pillows we will talk it.

*El.* First let me pray.

*Flor.* Not now : — to-morrow.

*El.* Oh !

I hear sweet sounds.

*Flor.* Nay, nay, — repose is needful.

(*Leads her in.*)

## ACT V.

SCENE I. *The cavern: discovering in rear a long arched passage, filled with armed men, disguised as foresters, friars, &c. MOUNTFORT, BERTRAM, and BARDOLPH, in armour, with torches in their hands, marshalling the throng. They at last come forward.*

*Mount.* A goodly brotherhood, friend Bertram !  
I ne'er saw better faces cowed : I spy  
Devotion in them.

*Bard.* Douglas ! cap-à-pie !

*Enter DOUGLAS.*

*Doug.* Now, by my hand, old Mountfort, that white  
beard  
Becomes a breastplate.

*Bert.* Say, where tarries Percy ?

*Doug.* Yet in the hall.

*Mount.* How goes the revel ?

*Doug.* High :  
They feast like gods : the Norman beakers clang,  
And foam, as for another kingdom won.  
Harps, horns, recorders, timbrels, trumpets, drums,  
Swell like the sea-stave : turret, keep, and tower  
Return a groan like ordnance from the hills.

*Mount.* Roar ! roar ! till wassail from the gates send  
forth  
A voice like Babylon ! But, sterner sounds  
Those towers may echo ere the dawn of day.



*Bert.* All things seemed hush without the walls ?

*Doug.* As death.

I met no living thing, nor heard a sound.

*Enter a Sentinel.*

*Sent.* My lords, two stag-hounds just now crossed  
my watch.

*Bert.* Ha ! stragglers of the chase are out.

Stand close.

*Doug.* Hush !

*(Springs to the mouth of the cavern.)*

*Bard.* What 's there ?

*Bert.* Hold, Sirs ; keep in.

*Mount.* What saw he ?

*Doug.* *(dragging in Rook.)*

Confront the light. — Hey ! Chevalier of Steeds ! —

Comest thou to taste my whip again ?

*Mount.* Sirrah,

What brought thee here ?

*Rook.* Sirrah ! my legs.

*Mount.* Snap'st, dog ?

Look that they bear thee stiffly then.

*(Strikes him.)*

*Rook.* Dotard,

I 'll pluck thy beard ! I know thee.

*Mount.* Dost thou, owl ?

Then this, — and this, — for old acquaintance' sake.

*(Beats him with his gauntlet.)*

*Enter Second Sentinel.*

*Second Sent.* Voices are in the wood, my lords, that  
draw

Apace this way.

*Doug.* Death ! (*Unsheaths his sword in alarm.*)

*Bert.* Quick ! shroud those torches.

*Bard.* Now villain, speak not, as thou lovest thy life.

*Mount.* (*Snatching out his dagger, and half throttling Rook.*)

Stand where thou art, — dumb, — motionless, — or else  
By God, and by the Sangreal, this throat

Never gasps more !

(*Voices heard without ; and the trampling of horses passing by. The sounds grow fainter ; and, by degrees, die away. After an interval of silence, BERTRAM and DOUGLAS cautiously approach the cavern's mouth.*)

*Bard.* Our hold is safe.

*Mount.* What ! Douglas, — up the wind ?

(*BARDOLPH and MOUNTFORT follow the other two ; and all stand listening. Rook steals, unperceived, behind a dark angle of the wall.*)

*Bert.* That shrillest voice was Neville's page.

*Doug.* Their course

Is toward the castle. Yet I hear the hoof-tramp.

*Bert.* Benighted huntsmen, not a doubt.

*Doug.* Great Jove !

They must have passed within a lance's length.

*Mount.* Hark !

A shout. —

*Bert.* Their salutation at the gate :

And now athwart the barbican they clatter.

*Doug.* (*turning.*) Ha ! where 's that villain ?

*Bert.* Heavens !

*Mount.* Incarnate fiend !

One instant since he stood behind me.

*Doug.* Watch there ——

He could not pass, — he lurks in some dark nook —

(*Rook darts from the cavern.*)

*Mount.* (*clapping his hands.*) Escaped, by Heaven!

*Bert.* And Percy's lost!

(*DOUGLAS snatches a cross-bow from one of the Sentinels and rushes out, followed by BARDOLPH.*)

*Mount.* My life upon that bolt! —

Now Douglas! — Bardolph! — now like greyhounds strain!

*Bert.* We're lost, — 't is dark, — he cannot, — all is lost!

*Mount.* (*striding up and down, greatly agitated.*)

Who says we're lost? — O, Douglas! now outstrip

Your mountain whirlwinds, — Lost, my lord? — No  
— no —

(*Aside, in a sudden and eager whisper.*)

But if —— were 't best? Ha? — swoop upon them, ere  
He warn them?

*Bert.* What?

*Mount.* Peace! Hark! — He cannot 'scape! —

Twang, noble Scot! — O, wet the feather, Douglas! —

*First Sent.* My lords, they come.

*Re-enter DOUGLAS and BARDOLPH bearing in Rook,  
wounded with an arrow.*

*Mount.* Lo! — Lo! — I knew it! — Heaven!

I saw! — Could Douglas fail in such a cast?

*Bert.* O, Douglas, thou hast saved us! twice hast  
saved us!

*Doug.* What mean these chances, friends, that tread  
so fast

On one another's heels?

*Bert.* Omens, I fear,  
Of fatal augury.

*Mount.* Of victory! — of vengeance! —  
Doth not the blood of yonder miscreant —  
*Enter PERCY.*

*Doug.* Tush!  
Help him aside. — How speeds it in the hall?

*Per.* As yet, our fortune shines in the ascendant.  
Henry is high in glee; Neville well pleased;  
His haughty Lady smiles, and sends such cups  
Of potent Rhenish round as Mars would reel with. —  
Are all the forces here?

*Bard.* All come, all harboured.

*Per.* Well: the hour draws nigh. Where's Fitz-  
hugh?

*Mount.* Sick,  
Sick, Percy! taken last night grievously!  
O, look not in my face. — Five hundred spears  
Came at my heels.

*Per.* (*pressing his hand.*) Heroic Chief! What  
cause  
Couldst thou not animate! — The order, friends,  
You fully know. Lord Mountfort will control  
This post, the vaults, and subterranean passes?  
Bardolph invest the walls; Bertram defend  
The armory. My side the Douglas guards.  
Grave on your hearts the iterated charge,  
No sword be sheathless, nor an arrow poised,  
Till I command. Who stirs ere that for blood,  
Is Percy's foe. The King will quickly rise:  
Then comes the Masque; and when the castle bell

Strikes, to your posts. To questions, answer, Masquers.  
(To DOUGLAS.) A word with thee.

(*They retire down the cavern.*)

*Bert.* O, that the die were cast !

*Bard.* You seem much downcast, Bertram.

*Bert.* I have seen times

Ere now, when darkness black as Erebus  
Shut in my soul, and this world seemed a lair  
For beasts to howl in ; but, as grace I hope,  
I never keener anguish felt than now :  
Scarce, when I plucked my blasting dagger forth,  
And found it reeking with a brother's blood. —  
Like one commissioned from the skies to heal me,  
He came, a ministering Angel, to my cell.  
Wisdom, and peace, as honey, from his lips,  
Assuaging fell. He reasoned, comforted,  
Convinced me — Oh ! you know not half his worth,  
Not half the beauties of his generous heart.  
Now, should he fall, — should savage Henry crop  
This flower of nature —

*Mount.* Tut, no fear of that.

*Bert.* How bore the King, Sir, when devouring hosts  
Tumbled, like billows, round him ; birds of death  
Screaming above his head ? — At evening's close,  
His bandogs gorged the flesh of Princes ; Knights,  
And Nobles lay, as blasted locusts heap  
The desert sands. Will he tamely submit ?  
He slur the brightness of his vaunted glory  
By lightly yielding to our threats ?

*Mount.* Wait till we ask it ! — Fight it to the death !  
The boon we crave ! — Forbid it, Vengeance ! Yield ?

First let him taste us ; grapple once with men,  
Not dainty sucklings of the milk of France.

*Bert.* Your passion leads astray. Suppose him slain :  
Where are we then ?

*Mount.* Where are we ? Lords of England.

*Bert.* Would Bedford, Clarence, Glo'ster, bow to  
that ?

*Mount.* Think'st thou we wait their leave ?

*Bert.* Your scope, my lord,  
I know not. If at civil bloodshed —

*Mount.* Nay,  
I love not that ; though I should like to pay  
Some rubs and knocks that I and others took  
Of upstarts.

*PERCY and DOUGLAS return.*

*Per.* Nothing, my friends, have I to add.  
To say, — Be resolute ; be cool ; — were breath  
Spent idly. Mark ! the bell. Adieu !

*Mount.* Percy and Esperance ! Sound, trumpets !  
Charge  
For old Northumberland !

*Bert.* Farewell ! farewell !

*Per.* Cheer up, kind Bertram : faint not at the door.  
Remember Percy's motto —

*Mount.* (*in a low voice to DOUGLAS.*) Haggard,  
Look to the stag of ten !

*Per.* No further talk : now to your several charges.  
(*Exeunt PERCY and DOUGLAS : the rest move  
down the cavern.*)

## SCENE II.

*The Castle hall. Lady WESTMORELAND, ELINOR, and FLORENCE, seated under a canopy : King HENRY, and Nobles, in their hunting dresses, gathered round them in conversation : the Royal retinue, and retainers of the Castle, scattered in groups about the hall, while the tables are drawn.*

*K. Hen.* I flatter not. Now, what says noble Warwick ?

*War.* As much, my liege : the hunt was bravely pushed.

*K. Hen.* Ay, by my knighthood, thrice upon the course

I thought to ask what mettled gallant led it.

*War.* I cannot say, my liege : an active huntsman.

*K. Hen.* Lady ! good Aunt ! Or, Cousin, thou canst tell. —

What stripling Centaur leads your father's hunt ?

*El.* My liege, — I — know not —

*K. Hen.* Blush not, pretty playfere :

I broke not truce. Those timorous ears are pricked  
At every fancy.

*Flor.* Simple girl ! —

His name is Arthur, gracious liege.

*K. Hen.* Well, mistress,

What more ? what parentage ? whence and who is he ?

*Lady West.* (*turning quickly.*) A beggar-boy, we took for charity.

*War.* Here comes my brother.

*K. Hen.* Uncle Westmoreland,  
What daring youth led forth the train to-day ?

*West.* You task me, liege, above my knowledge.

*K. Hen.* Patience !

*West.* Which simply ends in this, his name is Arthur.  
Three months ago, I found him, coarsely clad,  
Driven in one blustering night to 'scape a storm.  
Silent he seemed, and sad of heart ; yet spake  
With such mild grace, the less he said, the more  
Curious I grew to hear. His friends were dead ;  
(For, once, he said, he had them kind, and able ;)   
His patrimony lost ; and he an exile.  
Won by a gentle word or two, he begged,  
Having no home, a place among my huntsmen :  
A boon right gladly granted ; since repaid  
By deeds of nearest service to our house.

*K. Hen.* He has endowments : you should cherish  
him.

Such feats of horsemanship I scarce have seen.

*West.* Liege, every free and high-born courtly grace  
Prized by the noblest nursed in Princes' halls,  
Learning, arms, courtesy, and wit, appear  
Native in him as doth his horsemanship.

*K. Hen.* Why, Uncle, these are marvels. Call him in.

*West.* He plainly shuns the light ; but I have worn  
An eye of note upon him, and, of late,  
Begin to think him far above his seeming.

*K. Hen.* Cite him. How long his service here ?

(*A flourish of music.*)

*Seneschal.* (*loudly, from the lower part of the hall.*)  
The Masque !



*West.* First, view a little entertainment, liege,  
Devised and led by him.

*Seneschal.* Lords, clear the hall.

*West.* My lords, and gentlemen, please you be seated.

*(The crowd retires, leaving the area of the hall vacant.)*

*(A shrill fanfare from the minstrels ushers in a phalanx of Spearmen. They approach, in close array, the group round Lady WESTMORELAND and the KING; halt, and open into a crescent, discovering in the midst PERCY and DOUGLAS in splendid armour. An ivory horn suspended by PERCY's side, and the armorial bearings of his house blazoned on his shield. He lifts his beaver, advances, and speaks.)*

*Per.* To show our humble pageant, dreaded Liege,  
Fair Ladies, Peers, and Knights, behold us come. —  
Fearful a tale artless and rude as ours  
May prove, from lips unskilled in buskined pomp,  
But wearisome to Courtiers; yet, kind Sirs,  
We 'll show you warriors' pastime, when the King,  
Girt with his Barons, rises. Rise ye must;  
All, — Knight and Noble, — to a doubtful game!  
For honor, life, we play, and mean, my lords,  
To quit us valiantly.

*West. (aside.)* Why, who are these?

*Per.* I cannot practise, for your sport, the Antic.  
Too long, too long a Masquer, Arthur comes,  
Stripped of disguise, this night, to execute  
His fathers' testament; — whose blood lies spilt;

Whose murmurs from the tomb are in his ears ;  
Whose injuries are treasured in a scroll  
Steeped with a mother's and an orphan's tears.  
O'er that dark record has my spirit groaned,  
Since dawning reason, in unuttered anguish,  
When others danced, struck the glad wire, or caught  
The thrilling murmurs of loved lips, I roamed  
Where the hill-foxes howl, and eagles cry,  
Brooding o'er wrongs that haunted me for vengeance.

*K. Hen.* What tune may this be, Uncle ?

*West.* Faith, my lord —

*Per.* For I have been an outcast from my cradle ;  
Poor, and in exile, while an alien called  
My birthright, home. Halls founded by my sires  
Have blazed and rudely rung with stranger triumphs ;  
Their honorable name rivals have stained ;  
Trampled their laurels and profaned their bones ;  
Hence have I labored ; watched while others slept ;  
Known not the spring of life, nor ever plucked  
One vernal blossom in the day of youth.  
The harvest of my toils, this night, I reap ;  
For death, this night, or better life awaits me.  
Before my lord the King I stand, and claim  
Northumberland, my just inheritance,  
As Henry Percy, son and heir of Hotspur.

(*All start.*)

*West.* Percy ! — Hotspur ! —

*K. Hen.* (*to WESTMORELAND.*) What say'st thou now ?

*West.* Impossible ! impossible ! great Heaven !

It cannot be.

*Lady West.* 'T is but in sport, my lords,  
'T is but the play.

*West.* What means this, boy? — But sport? —  
Speak, or by Heaven —

*Per.* Peruse yon steely circle. —  
Do those dark faces seem familiar?

*West.* Ha!

*Per.* Those are the warriors of the Bloody Heart,  
And this the son of Douglas.

*West.* (*starting back.*) Douglas! — No;  
This cannot be.

*Doug.* (*raising his beaver sternly.*) Look!

*West.* What! ho! to arms!  
Treason! to arms!

*Knights.* (*in different parts of the hall.*)  
Arms! — Hark you? — Sirs, they cry to arms.

*Seneschal.* (*hastily approaching.*) What means that  
shout?

*West.* (*loudly.*) Treason! to arms! Ho! Treason!  
(*A confused multitude of voices repeat the cry,  
and knights rush to the door, but are driven  
in. PERCY and DOUGLAS, meanwhile, lean in  
silence on their swords. The pibroch is  
sounded.*)

*Seneschal.* (*returning.*) The pass is guarded.

*West.* (*to King HENRY.*) Follow me.

(*Hurries to a postern near the seat of Lady  
WESTMORELAND, which he throws open.*)

Descend, my liege.

*Voices within.* Stand back! Ho! Esperance!

*K. Hen.* Ha! hold, my lord.

*West.* O, treachery! O, villain!

(*An armed man appears upon the steps of the  
passage, and closes the postern.*)

*Per.* Thou find'st us provident.

*West.* Accursed traitor !

*(Rushes at PERCY with his dagger, but meets the levelled lances of the spearmen.)*

*Per.* Tempt not your fate. — Beware, Lord Westmoreland !

*West.* Slave ! hypocrite ! *(Striking his head.)* Fool ! fool ! most blind.

*K. Hen.* Cousin of Westmoreland, stand here awhile.

*(Advances a few steps ; waves his hand to silence the tumult ; when all is hushed, speaks.)*

My lords, and gentlemen, an unknown youth,  
A vassal in my uncle's hunting train,  
The selfsame wight who led our dogs to-day,  
Now boldly enters to the presence, backed  
By foreign arms, and challenges a right  
Conferred by our most gracious father's will  
On valiant Westmoreland, for deeds of love  
Rendered our house when faction shook the throne.  
He claims Northumberland ; in right of blood  
Drawn from rebellious Percy. Well you know  
That name was blotted from the roll of Peers  
When old Northumberland, from faith scarce pledged,  
And pardon fell, lending his reverend locks  
Anew to traitors. — Hollow title this !  
But where the vouchers even for this ? His name,  
He says, is Percy. Sirs, must we believe ?  
Give me a sword, — my lord of Warwick, thine. —  
Now, sirrah, prove thy vaunt here on the King.  
Stand forth, if kin to Hotspur. He had charged

Through hosts Infernal to the gates of Hell,  
Ere Man or Demon twice braved him to combat.  
Leave, if thou darest, the covert of those spears.  
Thus bucklered with my mantle, I defy thee  
Blazing in Percy's arms.

*Per.* That Percy's spirit lives, my lord,  
A burning, proudly-swelling witness tells me.  
But blood I seek not. Justice —

*K. Hen.* Craven, peace!  
When Hotspur spoke, his trumpet of alarm,  
Fire-snorting steed, and shout of onset answered.  
His thundering descant was on foemen's crests!  
What lithe-tongued Insolent is this who claims  
A hero for his sire? Away! away!

*Doug.* Endure these taunting tongues no longer,  
Percy:  
Let's prove ourselves as they would have us.

*Per.* No, —  
Douglas, — I charge thee on thine oath —

*K. Hen.* What! dost thou think to daunt us, boy? In  
arms  
To parley with the King? I thought, by Heaven,  
I had some small repute; I thought the world,  
By this time, knew me. — Bare your weapons, lords.

*Flor.* O, Heaven!

*El.* Ah! mother! mother!

*Lady West.* Peace; be still.

*West.* They rue this gambol. Marked you, liege,  
the flash  
Of swords unsheathing?

*Per.* Westmoreland, beware!

Under these walls a vengeful Spirit wakes  
More terrible than glared on Brutus. Harm  
The life he watches, and to-morrow's dawn  
Finds thee, thy King, this mingled throng, these towers  
Founded as cliffs, a blasted, smouldering heap  
Of blood and ashes.

*West.* Babbler, peace! My lord,  
Now shall we charge?

*Per.* Stay, madman, but a breath  
Upon this bugle.

*(Sounds his horn. MOUNTFORT and his party answer, from under the walls, with a terrific blast, that rolls in hollow echoes through the abysses of the Castle, and dies away like distant thunder.)*

*West.* Gods!

*Per.* Again, my lord.

*(Sounds; and is answered by BERTRAM from the armory above; a third time, by BARDOLPH from the four corners of the Castle. A pause of astonishment and silence.)*

*West.* Is hell disgorged around us?

*Per.* A thousand horns have answered at my call,  
A thousand spears are brandished for the charge,  
And never did a thousand bolder hearts  
Heave under breast-plate for the work of death.

*(Takes off his helmet, and advances a little.)*

Can any question who I am, my lords? —

If any; speak. — Could falsehood purchase aught

But shame, detection, and immediate fall? —

My lord and King, this youth, my friend, is Douglas;

Born of a race that nicely guards its honor.  
That spotless honor lies this night at pawn,  
Sworn to redeem my pledge.

*(Uncasps his bugle-horn, and casts it round the neck of DOUGLAS.)*

Doug. *(waving his sword.)* Clansmen! retire.

*(Their followers withdraw from the hall, leaving PERCY and DOUGLAS alone amidst the royal train.)*

Per. Scarce was I born, when our brave fathers burst  
Their solemn league, indissoluble thought,  
When Percy's hand gave Bolingbroke the crown.  
I ask not whose the fault in that sad breach.  
If Percy erred, has not the name yet made  
Its expiation? — O! my lord, look back!  
Let Shipton, Shrewsbury, and Bramham-Moor,  
Let the dire pangs that broke my mother's heart,  
Let my own banishment and blasted youth,  
Declare. — I am the last of all the Percies:  
A name coeval with the crown thou wearest,  
And prized for ages as its brightest gem.

*(Throws off his cuirass, and kneels; presenting his sword and breast to the King.)*

Death — death — or my inheritance! Enact  
Thy sovereign pleasure, for by Heaven I swear,  
By Hotspur's ashes, by the faith of Douglas,  
A hair of thine shall never fall for me.

*(Exclamations from all sides. The circle presses towards the King, who remains awhile silent.)*

K. Hen. A desperate game, — but played out gallantly. —

Relenting thoughts and ancient amity  
Had touched our bosom. Fraught with Percy's pardon,  
Missives in Scotland bear our seal. His flight  
Reserves it for his Monarch's lips. Arise,  
As Percy, Lucy, Poinings, Fitz-Payne, Bryan,  
Knight of the Garter, Earl Northumberland. —  
Swear on this sword, faith, fealty, and allegiance,  
By us, and by our throne, through life, to stand  
A loyal, brave defender.

*Per.* Sword — life — all

I dedicate — I consecrate —

*K. Hen.* Earl Westmoreland, this act makes thee a  
Marquis.

Henceforth, be styled Marquis of Montacute.

*West.* Meet thanks, puissant King.

*Per.* My lord, — my Sovereign.

*(Advances through the crowd to ELINOR, who,  
pale and fainting, hangs upon FLORENCE.)*

Thy royal grace restores my lands, but ah !

Add this, *(clasping her hand,)* or but a sepulchre thou  
givest !

Life were a curse, — a diadem but dust,

Bereft of this !

*West. (aside.)* Furies !

*Per.* Plead, plead for me,

My gracious master ! — Stern and frowning eyes  
Are bent upon me ; — fatal, else, this night  
For ever to my hopes.

*K. Hen.* What says my uncle ?

*West.* Death —

The grave — her bridegroom and her bed shall be,



Before that traitor. For my land I took,  
 Without a murmur, as a princely boon,  
 A barren title ; but, by all the gods,  
 O'er my own daughter I am Heaven's vicegerent.

*Lady West.* O, heed not, gracious Sovereign, —

*K. Hen.* Have a care,

Or troth thou 'lt win a sterile seigniory !  
 For mark ye, my good lord, the King would call  
 That traitor — brother, friend, or son, more proudly,  
 Than any prince now crowned in Christendom.

(*To Lady WESTMORELAND.*)

Instruct me, lady. — Doth the maid incline ?

*West.* I swear, my lord, —

*K. Hen.* (*sternly.*) Peace, Sir !

(*Approaches ELINOR, who conceals her face on  
 FLORENCE'S shoulder.*)

*Per.* (*in a supplicating voice, still retaining her hand.*)

Father, and Sovereign ! —

*K. Hen.* Fear nothing. — Elinor ?

*Flor.* She cannot speak :

The terrifying tumult yet distracts her.

*K. Hen.* (*to PERCY.*) Forbear : — I see : — no further press to night.

(*Takes ELINOR'S hand.*)

Come, pretty throstle, hie thee to thy nest.  
 A bustling day and night we 've had of it,  
 And many cares await thee on the morrow.  
 Let Henry, like a good physician, now  
 Bless, and dismiss thee gravely to repose.  
 But, like a May-Queen, ere the earliest beam  
 Call the young eaglets from their cloud-built bowers,

